

**ADA COMPLEMENTARY
PARATRANSIT
RIDER'S GUIDE**



Brunswick Link
16 Station Avenue, Suite 107
Brunswick, ME 04011
Telephone: 207-721-9600
Email: info@brunswicklink.org
www.brunswicklink.org

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Brunswick Link provides transportation to individuals who, because of their disability, are unable to travel on the Brunswick Link fixed route public transit service operated by Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS).

This service is designed to provide those persons with a disabilities equal access to transportation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is ADA Paratransit service?.....	5
Who is Eligible for ADA Paratransit Service?.....	5
How do I get Certified?	5
Can I Appeal the ADA Certification Determination?.....	6
Recertification Process.....	6
ADA Hours of Operation	6
ADA Service Area	6
ADA Paratransit Fare	7
Personal Care Attendants (PCA) and Companions/Friends	7
How to Schedule an ADA Ride	7
Scheduling a return trip.....	8
Cancellation and No Shows.....	8
Service Cancellations or Delays	9
Visitor Policy	9
Service Animals.....	9
Pets	10
Mobility Devices	10
Portable Oxygen Tanks.....	10
Rider Safety.....	10
Reasonable Modifications.....	11
Customer Courtesy and Conduct	11
Rules of Conduct:	11
Compliments, Complaints or Questions.....	11

Effective Date

November 22, 2021

What is ADA Paratransit service?

ADA complementary Paratransit is an origin-to-destination transit service provided to certified individuals during the same days and hours as the Brunswick Link fixed route service. ADA is a shared ride and when using the bus, passengers should expect it to stop enroute for other riders. Rides for ADA must be scheduled in advance, no later than the day before the desired trip.

Who is Eligible for ADA Paratransit Service?

This service is designed to provide those persons with disabilities equal access to public transportation. You may be eligible for ADA Paratransit service if, because of a disability:

- You cannot independently travel to/from fixed route bus stops within the service area.
- You could use an accessible fixed route vehicle, but the route that would be used is not accessible.
- You cannot independently navigate the system even though you can board the bus.

Your ADA Paratransit eligibility will fall under one of the four categories below:

- Unconditional Eligibility – If your disability prevents you from traveling on the fixed route public transit service for all trips.
- Conditional Eligibility – If your disability prevents you from traveling on the fixed route public transit service for some trips but not others, depending on the circumstance and the nature of the disability.
- Temporary Eligibility – Your eligibility is granted for a specific period of time depending on the circumstances, nature, and duration of the disability.
- Not Eligible – If you do not have a disability that prevents you from traveling on the fixed route public transit service, or your disability is not to a degree that it prohibits you from traveling on the fixed route bus.

Your ADA Paratransit certification is based on ADA eligibility regulations and guidelines, including information from the ADA application, potential face-to-face interview, professional verification, functional assessment, and/or environmental check.

How do I get Certified?

To become ADA Paratransit certified you must complete and submit a written application to Brunswick Link for ADA service. The application is available on the Brunswick Link website, www.brunswicklink.org or by calling the Brunswick Link office at 207-721-9600.

Applicants will receive written notification of the eligibility determination within 21 days of Brunswick Link receiving a completed application. If you disagree with the determination, you have the right to appeal. If you do not receive your determination within 21 days, you will be granted eligibility from the 22nd day through such time that a determination is made.

Applicants are not eligible to ride Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit service while the application is being reviewed.

Can I Appeal the ADA Certification Determination?

Some applicants are not eligible. If it is determined that you are not eligible, you may appeal the decision.

1. The appeal must be in writing and submitted within 60 calendar days from the date of the denial stated on the "letter of eligibility."
2. Brunswick Link may require an in-person interview to assist in determining functional abilities of an applicant to ride the fixed route transit service.
3. If, after further review, Brunswick Link cannot certify the applicant due to information provided on the application, Brunswick Link will provide a statement in writing as to why the individual was denied ADA Paratransit certification.
4. The statement, along with the application and the individuals request for an appeal will be sent to the Brunswick Link ADA Advisory Committee.
5. The ADA Advisory Committee will set a hearing within 30 days of receiving the request for an appeal.

Recertification Process

ADA Paratransit recertification is required every three years. You will be sent recertification information 90 days prior to the expiration of your current eligibility. An update statement from a Qualified Physician regarding the disability is required for recertification.

Make sure to submit your recertification application in a timely manner so you do not go without having service. We have up to 21 days to process the application.

You must have a current certification to be eligible to ride ADA Paratransit.

ADA Hours of Operation

ADA Paratransit service is available during the same days and hours as the Brunswick Link fixed route public transit service. The service is available Monday through Friday between the hours of 6:00 AM to 7:15 PM. The last pick-up is 6:45 PM.

ADA service is not available on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day

ADA Service Area

ADA Paratransit provides service within a 3/4 (0.75) mile radius surrounding the Brunswick Link fixed route transit service. You do not have to live in the service area to be eligible to use the service; however, your trip origin and destination must be.

There are no trip restrictions or limit to the number of trips you take each day.

ADA Paratransit Fare

Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit fare is \$3.00 for each one-way trip. Exact fare must be paid at the time of boarding. Drivers do not make change.

Fare payment can be made using cash, credit and debit cards, Mobile pay apps or WMTS' "SmartCommute" pass. WMTS' SmartCommute pass is a reloadable pass carrying up to \$150.00. A 10% discount is given when \$50.00 or more is loaded onto the pass. The SmartCommute pass is available to purchase at the Brunswick Link office located at Brunswick Station or by calling WMTS' Administrative Office at 1-800-393-9335.

Personal Care Attendants (PCA) and Companions/Friends

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone that travels with the ADA Paratransit rider to provide assistance with one or more daily life activities such as providing personal care, performing manual tasks, or providing assistance with mobility or communication that the ADA rider is unable to do independently due a disability. The need for a PCA is documented on the ADA certification application process. The need for a PCA can be added to your records if your situation changes.

- PCAs travel free on ADA Paratransit.

A companion or friend is someone that you bring along with you to share the trip, but not assist you. You may bring one companion/friend, more if space is available.

- Companions/friends pay \$3.00 for each one-way trip.

PCAs and companions/friends must be picked up and dropped off at the same location as the ADA Paratransit rider.

How to Schedule an ADA Ride

ADA Paratransit trip reservations can be made by calling Brunswick Link Passenger Relations at 207-721-9600 during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM-5:00 PM, Saturday, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, and via voicemail message on Sunday's and holidays. Voicemail messages must be left by 4:00 PM to schedule a ride for the following day.

Rides may be scheduled up to 14 days in advance but *no later than* 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, and 4:00 PM on weekends and holidays *the day before the trip*.

Have the following information ready when calling to schedule a ride:

- The date and time of trip pick-up and return.
- The exact name and address of the pick-up and drop-off locations.
- Inform Passenger Relations if you are planning on bringing a PCA, companion or service animal.
- Inform Passenger Relations if you are using a mobility device.
- When the arrival time is of primary importance, such as a rider to work, inform Passenger Relations. Your pick-up time will be adjusted to accommodate the time of arrival.

- Inform Passenger Relations if the arrival time is flexible, such as a ride to shopping or visiting. Passenger Relations will provide pick-up and drop-off times that fit the most important.
- Provide Passenger Relations with any other pertinent information, ie: providing the telephone number of the facility if scheduling a medical or other appointment.

Riders must schedule a pick-up and drop-off time even if only at a location for a short period of time. These times must be a minimum of 30-minutes apart.

As a general rule, drivers do not wait for rider more than 5-minutes at any location.

To maintain schedule efficiency, it is recommended that riders be ready to depart one-hour before your appointment time. Drop-off times may be up to 30 minutes before a rider's appointment time and pick-up afterwards may be up to 30 minutes after the requested return pick-up time.

Scheduling a return trip

There are two ways to schedule a return trip.

Fixed time – If you know the time when you will be ready to return, a fixed time can be scheduled at the time of the initial trip request.

Will call return – If you do not know what time you will be ready for your return trip you can call Passenger Relations when you are ready to return. A "will call" for the return trip would be after a medical appointment.

- At the time of scheduling your trip, inform Brunswick Link Passenger Relations that a "will call return" trip is needed.
- Riders need to call Brunswick Link at 207-721-9600 by 4:45 PM to schedule their "will call return" trip. Passenger Relations will attempt to call any rider who has not scheduled their Will Call Return trip.
- The arrival of the bus on a Will Call Return trip can be anywhere between 5 minutes to one hour after you call. Riders must be ready to leave when the bus arrives.
- Will Call Returns cannot be used for a pick-up at your residents.

Cancellation and No Shows

You should cancel a ride as soon as you know you do not need it. You will be considered a "No Show" if you:

- Call to cancel your ride less than two hours before the scheduled pick-up window;
- The vehicle arrives on time and waits 5 minutes, but you are not ready to go; or,
- You refuse the trip upon arrival of the bus.

A "Will Call Return" ride should be cancelled.

A suspension of service may result from excessive No Shows.

To cancel a previously schedule ride contact Brunswick Link Passenger Relations at 207-721-9600.

Service Cancellations or Delays

If the Brunswick Link fixed route service is cancelled or delayed due to weather or other events, the ADA Paratransit service will be as well. If the Brunswick Link fixed route and ADA services are delayed or closing early, please check the storm cancellations listed by your local television stations. Be sure to call Brunswick Link Passenger Relations to reschedule your ADA Paratransit ride.

Brunswick Link will strive to provide a minimum two hour notice of any service delays or shut downs.

Visitor Policy

Individuals that are ADA Paratransit certified for other public transit systems are eligible to use Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit for a combination of 21 days during any 365 day period beginning the first use of the service. As a visitor you must provide:

- Name and proof of address at legal residence;
- Documentation of a valid ADA Paratransit certification from another transit provider.

Visitor eligibility will expire after one year. Visitors can reapply. Individuals that plan on being in the area longer than 21 days or frequently visit the area are encourage to apply for Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit eligibility.

Service Animals

Service animals may travel on Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit vehicles to provide assistance to individuals with disabilities. If you require the assistance of a service animal it must be documented in your certification file. The file can be updated at any time by calling the Brunswick Link Passenger Relations.

A service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.

What is expected when traveling with a service animal:

- When scheduling your ride be sure to tell Passenger Relations that you will be accompanied by a service animal.
- The service animal must be under the control of the handler at all times.
- The service animal must be on a leash, harness, tether at all times, or voice control if individual's disability prevents them from using a leash, harness or tether.
- The service animal must remain on the bus floor and be in the "sit" or "down" position. Service animals may not block the aisle of the bus.
- If a service animal misbehaves, the rider and the service animal will be returned to the rider's residents.
- If a service animal misbehaves, the owner is responsible for its actions and all costs associated with its actions.

Pets

Animals that are not service animals may ride on ADA paratransit only if they are properly secured in a cage or kennel. For safety reason, drivers are not permitted to carry cages or kennels on or off the ADA paratransit vehicles. If you need assistance with a pet, please arrange to travel with someone who can help you.

Mobility Devices

Riders may use wheelchairs, canes, walkers and other mobility devices on Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit. When you schedule your ride, be sure to let Passenger Relations know that you are traveling with a mobility device.

If you use a wheelchair:

- It is required that all wheelchairs be secured using the securement system in designated locations on the vehicles.
- Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit may not deny transportation to a wheelchair or its user if the wheelchair cannot be secured or restrained satisfactorily by the vehicles securement system.
- Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit may decline to carry an individual using a wheelchair if the combined weight exceeds lift or ramp specifications of 600 pounds or if the size of the wheelchair is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements.
- It may be recommended that the user of the wheelchair transfer to a vehicle seat. Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit may not require the individual to transfer to a seat.
- Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit personnel must assist individuals with disabilities with the use of the securement system, ramps or lifts when necessary or upon request.

Individuals with mobility issues may request the driver to deploy the vehicles lift or ramp to board or exit the bus. Use of the lift or ramp is not exclusive to individuals that use a wheelchair.

Portable Oxygen Tanks

Riders may travel with portable oxygen tanks when using Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit service. For safety reasons, the tanks must be secured to the rider's mobility device or themselves to prevent the tank from falling, striking another object, or becoming dislodged and becoming a projectile. The driver will assist you in securing this equipment, but drivers are not permitted to assist you in using the equipment. If you need assistance with portable life support equipment, please arrange to bring a qualified attendant along with you.

Rider Safety

Rider safety is important to us.

Riders who use a mobility device are encouraged to transfer to a seat. Drivers can offer minimal assistance such as extending an arm or stabilizing the mobility device while the rider transfers. Drivers are prohibited from lifting or carrying riders. It is strongly encouraged for riders using three wheeled scooters to transfer to a seat. Scooters cannot always be adequately secured and may present a significant hazard to everyone on board.

Seat belts are required under Maine State law for all riders.

Reasonable Modifications

Brunswick Link will make reasonable modifications to its operations upon request, as long as, the request does not cause a direct threat to the health and safety of others, results in a fundamental alteration of the service, is unnecessary in order for the individual with the disability to receive services or results in an undue financial or administrative burden to Brunswick Link.

Customer Courtesy and Conduct

Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit has a list of common-sense rules to ensure the safety of all customers and Brunswick Link employees. We ask that customers, their personal care attendant and any companion(s) traveling with customers observe the following:

Rules of Conduct:

- No smoking, vaping, eating or drinking on the vehicles.
- No abusive, threatening or obscene language or actions.
- No weapons or flammable or explosive materials are allowed on board.
- No standing is permitted.
- Seat belt use is required by law, all fines apply to riders. Seat belt extenders are available.
- Electronics must not bother other riders.
- Packages are limited to those a rider can carry aboard in one trip.
- Packages must be secure safely at the rider's seat or at a location specified by the driver.
- Packages may not be left on the bus if the rider isn't aboard.
- Oxygen tanks must be safely secured to users or mobility devices.
- Only trained service animals under control of the rider, or small pets in carriers, are permitted. DO NOT pet service animals.
- Shirts and shoes or other footwear must be worn.
- Littering is prohibited.
- Objects must not be thrown from the bus window.
- No operation or tampering with any vehicle equipment.

Compliments, Complaints or Questions

Brunswick Link is committed to providing a high quality transit service in compliance with US Department of Transportation Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please contact Brunswick Link Passenger Relations at 207-721-9600 if you have any compliments, complaints or questions regarding Brunswick Link ADA Paratransit service.