MAT PARATRANSIT Rider Guide



Effective January 2026

Table of Contents

About MAT Paratransit 2
Eligibility 3
Application Process 6
MATBUS Paratransit Mobile App 10
Paying For Your Ride 12
Scheduling A Ride 14
Travel Day Expectations 18
Rider Responsibility 23
When Things Don't Go As Planned 25
Reasonable Modification 26
Statement of Non-Discrimination 27
Questions, Compliments, or Complaints 28
Other Resources 29

Contact Information

- Phone: 701-235-4464
  711 Relay (TDD only)
- Fax: 701-241-8558
- Email: paratransit@matbus.com
  parareservations@matbus.com
- Ground Transportation Center
  502 NP Ave
  Fargo, ND 58102
- Metro Transit Garage
  650 23rd St N
  Fargo, ND 58102

MAT Paratransit Quick Facts

Overview

A shared ride service for people with disabilities that prevent them from riding the MATBUS fixed route service. It is a door-to-door service that has assistance available through the first outside door of the destination. MAT Paratransit operates within the city limits of Fargo/West Fargo, ND and Moorhead/Dilworth, MN.

Riders must be ADA paratransit eligible or qualify as eligible visitors.

Operating Days/Hours

- Monday-Friday: 6:15am-10:15pm
- Saturday: 7:15am-10:15pm
- Sunday: 7:00am-5:00pm

Paying For Your Ride

Cost to ride is $4.00 for each one-way trip. You can pay with cash, check, or coupon, or you can load a credit or debit card through the MATBUS Paratransit app/website.

Reservations

Reservations can be made up to 7 days in advance. Trips can be reserved with MATBUS staff over the phone, or by creating an account with the Via app/website (fully eligible riders only). Reservations can also be made by email at ParaReservations@matbus.com. There is a 30-minute pickup window for every trip.

About Paratransit

MAT Paratransit is a shared-ride public transportation service for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using fixed-route bus service for some or all trips. Advance reservations and ADA paratransit eligibility or qualified visitor status are required.

The service is door to door. Drivers may assist passengers through the first door of a public building or apartment building upon request, but will not enter a private residence. We do not provide emergency medical service. MAT Paratransit operates within the city limits of Fargo, Moorhead, West Fargo and Dilworth.

MAT Paratransit is a shared-ride service, which means that a vehicle will pick up and drop off passengers in the order that is most efficient for timing and location. Because of this, a rider will likely not travel directly to their destination without making additional stops.



Eligibility

Eligible riders are persons whose disabilities prevent them from riding independently on MATBUS fixed route service, which is the large-bus public transportation for the Fargo-Moorhead metro. MAT Paratransit is provided for these persons through a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). These qualified individuals may be referred to as “ADA Paratransit Eligible."

Qualification is based on the individual’s functional capabilities, rather than a specific medical diagnosis. The application contains questions about tasks that the individual is able to complete without assistance, which may vary among people with the same physical or mental condition.

When should I ride MATBUS fixed route instead of MAT Paratransit?

MATBUS fixed route service travels on predetermined fixed routes with consistent schedules, and is open to the general public. All MATBUS vehicles have accessible ramps and space for two wheelchairs.

A rider with a disability may not be approved for MAT Paratransit if they are able to complete the steps for riding MATBUS, including planning a trip (understanding routes and timetables), traveling to and from a bus stop, waiting outside for a bus to arrive, transferring between buses, and recognizing destinations.

All riders who are able to complete these steps are encouraged to ride MATBUS fixed routes, where they will be eligible for discounted fare. For more information about riding MATBUS, visit matbus.com or call 701-232-7500 Option 1.

Anyone approved to ride MAT Paratransit is automatically eligible for discount fare on MATBUS. If you choose to ride fixed route service, and pay with cash, it is recommended that you request a free Rider ID card to prove eligibility. If you plan to pay with the Connect Card or Connect App, contact MATBUS staff to be set up as a discount rider in the system.

Conditional Eligibility

Some applicants may be approved to ride MAT Paratransit, but only under certain conditions. This is called conditional eligibility. For example, a passenger may only be eligible to ride Paratransit during the winter, when snow and ice are present. This passenger would not be eligible to ride in the summer. If you are conditionally eligible, your specific conditions will be listed in your eligibility notification letter.

Service Area

MAT Paratransit operates within the city limits of Fargo/West Fargo, ND and Moorhead/Dilworth, MN.

Individuals living outside the service area may apply for MAT Paratransit eligibility. However, pickup and drop-off locations must be within the service area.

The ADA requires paratransit service to be provided to origins and destinations within 0.75 miles of a fixed bus route. MAT Paratransit

exceeds this minimum requirement by extending its service area to city limits.

Eligible Visitors

If you are visiting Fargo-Moorhead and have been certified as ADA Paratransit Eligible by another public entity, you are eligible to use MAT Paratransit. Visitors who have not been certified by another public entity may also qualify for visitor eligibility.

Visitors without existing ADA paratransit certification may be asked to provide proof of residency and, if their disability is not apparent, documentation of their disability.

Visitors may use MAT Paratransit for up to 21 days, which need not be consecutive, during any 365-day period beginning with their first use of the service. If service is needed beyond 21 days, visitors may be required to complete the MAT Paratransit application process.



Application Process

How to Get an Application

Applications are available for download on matbus.com, and in person at the Ground Transportation Center (502 NP Ave, Fargo, ND) and Metro Transit Garage (650 23rd St N, Fargo, ND). To request an application through the mail, call 701-235-4464.

Filling Out the Application

If you download the PDF version of the application from the MATBUS website, you can type your answers directly into the document. If you are filling out the application by hand, use blue or black ink and print your information clearly. Do not write in cursive.

Applications can be filled out by the prospective rider, or their designated representative or guardian. Interested riders may get assistance from case workers, medical professionals, family members or friends.

If you have questions or need help completing your application, contact MAT Paratransit staff by phone or email.

Professional Verification

Each application will include pages for riders to indicate the name and contact information of a professional that is familiar with their disability. These authorization forms constitute a release that allows the professional to answer questions about

the applicant's disability, using their professional background and knowledge of the applicant. This contact can be a medical provider or social worker/ case manager.

After MATBUS receives your application, we will send the authorization and professional verification forms to your chosen contact. Once that verification is returned to MATBUS, staff will review all documents to assess eligibility.

If the applicant's chosen professional is employed by Sanford Health, the applicant should fill out both authorization forms found at the end of the application – the general MAT Paratransit Authorization Form and the Sanford Health Authorization. If the professional is not at Sanford, only the first one is needed.

How to Submit an Application

You may turn in your application by one of these methods:

- **In person** at the Ground Transportation Center or Metro Transit Garage
- **Through the mail** to the Ground Transportation Center or Metro Transit Garage
- **Email** paratransit@matbus.com
- **Fax** 701-241-8558

Application Review

After MATBUS receives your application, it will be reviewed for completion. MATBUS staff may contact you if there is information missing. The authorization form(s) must be included in order to process your application.

To verify your disability, MATBUS will send the professional verification form to your chosen contact. Once the professional verification form is returned to MATBUS, staff will review all documents to assess eligibility.

Eligibility determinations will be made within 21 days of receiving a complete application, including the required professional verification. If a determination is not made within 21 days of receipt, the applicant may use MAT Paratransit until a final determination is made.

Once the application has been fully reviewed by MATBUS, you will receive a letter of eligibility. If you are approved, your letter will indicate whether you have full or conditional eligibility, and list any conditions that apply to your ability to schedule rides. If you are not approved, your reason for denial will be included in the letter. You will then have the option to choose a different professional that can verify your disability. Applicants may appeal eligibility determinations, including eligibility conditions, within 60 days, following the independent appeal process described in their



Get Your Application

Fill Out Application

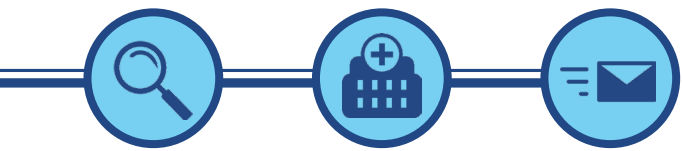
Turn In Application & Medical Form(s)

determination letter. If a decision is not made within 30 days after completion of the appeal process, service will be provided until a final determination is made.

Personal Care Attendant (PCA)

If you need a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) during travel or at your destination, indicate this on your application and when scheduling trips by phone, mobile app or website. Your PCA rides free and must have the same pickup and drop-off locations as you.

MAT Paratransit does not provide PCAs or continuous individual supervision. Passengers needing personal assistance or supervision are encouraged to bring their own PCA.



MATBUS Staff Review

Professional Verification

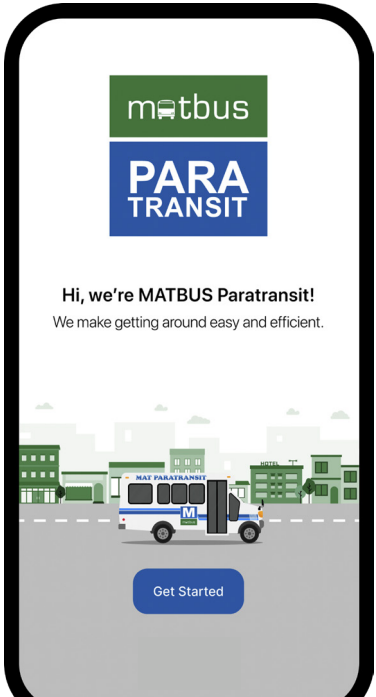
Approval/ Denial Letter Sent

MATBUS Paratransit Mobile App

The MATBUS Paratransit App allows fully eligible MAT Paratransit riders to schedule their own rides independently, rather than calling in to reservationists. This app is available in Google Play and the Apple App Store.

Rider Benefits

- Schedule rides any day at any time
- No need to wait on hold to speak to a reservationist
- Edit or cancel rides quickly
- Keep track of your upcoming rides
- Pay with your uploaded credit/debit card



Is using the app a good option for me?

Only fully eligible paratransit riders may schedule rides through the app. Anyone with conditional eligibility (snow/ice, hours of darkness, etc.) must continue to book rides by calling a reservationist.

The app would work best for riders who already schedule and pay for their rides independently. New riders should consider their comfort level in using smartphone apps, as well as managing their own calendar and making appointments. The app can also be used by family members or caregivers who schedule trips on behalf of the MAT Paratransit rider.

Sunday rides and next-day rides are not available through the app, and must be scheduled by phone. Any app scheduling done after office hours will be considered as occurring the next calendar day. Example: On Wednesday at 8:00pm, the earliest ride you could schedule is on Saturday.

Getting Started

Before using the app, you must have completed the application process, and be approved as a fully eligible MAT Paratransit rider. Do not set up an account on the app before you are fully approved.

- Download the app by searching for "MATBUS Paratransit" in your app store.
- Open the app and select the Get Started button on the home screen.
- Enter your phone number, and follow the prompts.
- If paying with a credit/debit card, upload the card details under Payment Methods.

Paying for Your Ride

Each one-way trip costs $4.00. This may be paid on board with cash or check, or a prepaid coupon.

Coupons can be purchased in books of 20 for $80.00. One coupon is worth $4.00 and valid for one trip. You can purchase coupon books on board from the driver or in person at MATBUS (either the Metro Transit Garage or Ground Transportation Center). Staff can also mail coupon books on request, if you send a check by mail. All coupon book sales are final and are NOT refundable. Coupons do not expire.

Rides booked through the MATBUS Paratransit app can be paid for with a credit/debit card. The card must be added to your app account prior to using it for ride payment. Riders can also use the other payment options when booking with the app.

Each passenger and guest must pay a fare. Exact fare is required, as drivers do not give change.

PCAs and children under the age of 7 ride free with an eligible passenger.

MATBUS cannot bill for rides after they have been taken. All rides must be paid for individually at the time of pickup. Drivers cannot accept payment for both pickup and return rides at the same time.

General public who are not Paratransit eligible may schedule rides for Sundays only, for a cost of $25.00 per one-way trip.



Agency Rate

If you currently live at an assistive care facility, there are other considerations when scheduling and paying for your ride. These facilities, if located in Fargo or West Fargo, are charged an Agency Rate of $38.00 per ride for their residents.

Skilled Nursing Facility

You should schedule your medical rides with the nursing facility where you live. The facility receives an all-inclusive rate for routine services through Medicaid payments, and transportation for medical rides is included. If the medical ride is scheduled through MAT Paratransit, MATBUS staff will then invoice the facility for the rides to and from the medical appointment.

Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID)

If you need to schedule rides to another day program, you should schedule those rides directly with the ICF/IID facility where you live.

Scheduling a Ride

Operating Days/Hours

MAT Paratransit operates Monday-Friday 6:15am-10:15pm, Saturday 7:15am-10:15pm, and Sunday 7:00am-5:00pm.

Reservations should be made at least one day prior to travel, and they can be made up to 7 days in advance. Same-day reservations will be accommodated as space allows.

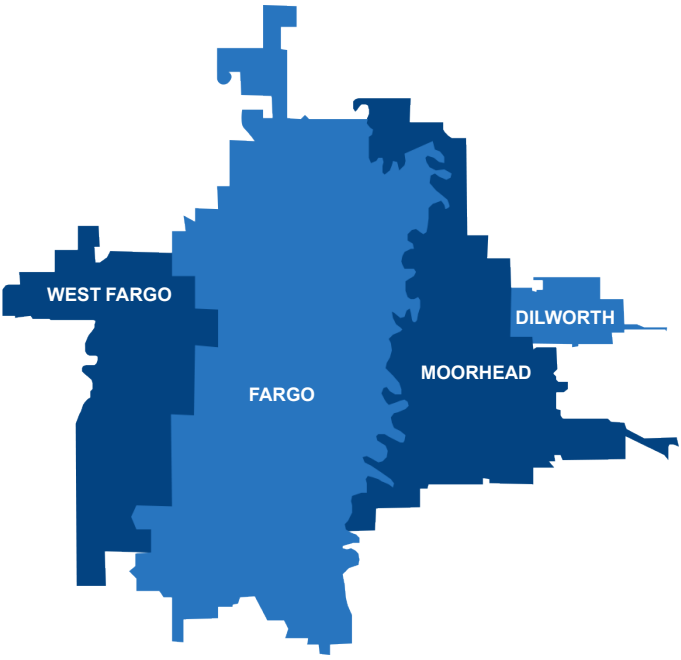
The ADA does not require Paratransit service on Sundays, because there is no MATBUS fixed route service on Sundays. However, the Cities of Fargo, Moorhead, West Fargo, and Dilworth have chosen to make limited service available on Sundays for paratransit-eligible riders. General public are also permitted to use the MAT Paratransit service on Sundays, for a fee of $25.00 per trip.

MAT Paratransit does not run on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Easter Sunday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve (no service after 5:15pm)
- Christmas Day

Service Area

You are permitted to schedule pickup and dropoff locations anywhere within the city limits of Fargo, Moorhead, West Fargo, and Dilworth. You may ride MAT Paratransit for any reason, like shopping, medical appointments, socializing, and more. Rides are not restricted by type of usage.



Scheduling By Phone

Call 701-235-4464, and a reservationist will assist you. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm. All calls must be received by 4:30pm. Any calls received on Sundays and holidays (through an answering machine) may only be for the purpose of reserving rides taken the next day.

Scheduling By Mobile App

Open the app, and enter your preferred date and times of travel. You will be shown options for available trip times. Select the option you would like to schedule, then select your payment method. Return rides will need to be scheduled separately. You can view all upcoming trips under the Scheduled Rides section.

Negotiating a Ride Time

MAT Paratransit may negotiate your pickup time up to one hour before or after your requested departure time. Please inform the reservationist of any required arrival time when scheduling your trip.

Subscription Rides

If you need to ride regularly at the same time and to the same destination, you may request a subscription reservation. Subscriptions are limited in availability. If you have a subscription, you will not need to call every week to reserve your rides. You will, however, need to cancel your ride if your plans change. Subscription rides during peak demand times may be restricted to trips for work, school, meals and medical services. Waiting lists may be established if available subscription slots are full. Consistently canceling your subscription ride may result in losing the subscription.

Return Rides

For non-medical rides, you should make a return reservation at the same time you make your reservation for your departure ride. If you are ready earlier than your scheduled return reservation, you may request to change your pickup time. These requests will be accepted if space is available, and if adding a ride will not

negatively affect other passengers. Your request for an earlier pickup time may be denied, and you will need to keep your original return trip.

Guests

Each passenger can have one person accompany them as a guest. More guests can ride, as long as space is available and no eligible client is refused a ride. The beginning and ending destination of the guest must be the same as yours. The guest must also pay the $4.00 fare to ride.

Before Calling For a Ride

These are the details a reservationist will request during your call:

- Your first and last name
- Date you'd like to travel
- If you will have a PCA or guest(s)
- If you will have a mobility device, and if so, what type
- If driver assistance is required
- Pickup and destination addresses
- Specific location details like door number, which side of building, etc.
- Preferred arrival/return times

Travel Day Expectations

Ready for Pickup

When you book your ride, you are given a scheduled pickup time. The vehicle may arrive within 15 minutes before or after your scheduled pickup time. This is called a pickup window. For example, if your scheduled pickup time is 10:00am, your window is 9:45-10:15am. You should be ready at the entrance of your pickup location at the beginning of your pickup window, with outerwear on and packages together. Generally, the driver will pull up to the curb, and cannot pull into the driveway of a residential home.

Driver Arrival



Upon arrival, the driver will honk the horn, then wait 5 minutes for you to appear. If you do not appear, the driver can leave, and your trip will be considered a "no show." The driver is not required to enter the building to look for you, nor is the reservationist required to call to notify you that the vehicle has arrived. If you have a current mobile phone number in the system, you will receive a text alert that the driver has arrived.

If there are other people nearby at your pickup location, wave at the driver to indicate that you are the appropriate person. Drivers do not have photos of their riders, so they may not realize you are their rider. If it is difficult for you to see the

driver or motion to them, we recommend providing clear identification details when booking, such as location, physical description, or assistive device.

Early Arrivals

If the vehicle arrives before your pickup window has opened (15 minutes prior to your scheduled time), the driver will park out of sight of the passenger, and wait until the pickup window begins. Then, they will go to the pickup location, honk the horn, and begin the 5-minute countdown.

Late Arrivals

If the vehicle arrives after your window has closed (more than 15 minutes after your scheduled time), and you refuse the ride or do not appear, this will be considered a missed trip and not a no show. Passengers are not penalized for missed trips.

Trip Denials

Drivers may refuse trips at unsafe locations, including areas with snow or ice. Reasonable modifications and safe pickup or drop-off alternatives will be considered.

Trip Notifications

All riders have access to receive trip notifications, regardless of eligibility type. Newly approved riders should verify that their current phone number is listed in their rider profile. Notifications can be made through texts to a mobile phone or calls to a mobile phone/landline.

If you are not receiving notifications, contact the reservationists to make sure the feature is enabled on your account. If you are getting texts and would prefer a phone call notification, or vice versa, contact the reservationists to adjust your settings.

Once the driver has completed the prior stop and is on their way to your location, you will receive a notification. This call or text message will say that the vehicle is about 15 minutes away. It also lists the address and vehicle. Another notification will be sent when the driver is about 5 minutes away.

When the vehicle arrives at your location, you will get a call or text that marks the beginning of your 5-minute waiting period. If you have received this notification and can't find your vehicle, contact MATBUS staff to verify your pickup location address or entrance.

If you do not connect with your driver within the 5-minute waiting period, you will receive a notification that the driver has left for the next stop.

Assistance

Upon request, drivers will assist riders between the vehicle and building entrance, including through the first door of public or apartment buildings. Request assistance by phone or through Via. Drivers will not enter private residences or provide personal care.

Drivers will assist with up to two grocery-sized bags or one small collapsible cart to the building entrance. Reasonable modifications to standard assistance procedures are available when needed for accessibility.

Mobility Aids/Service Animals

Riders are responsible for maintaining their mobility devices in safe working order. Riders needing personal assistance are encouraged to bring a PCA.

Drivers will assist riders with lift use, boarding, exiting and securement. Wheelchairs and scooters must be secured during transport; however, service will not be denied solely because a mobility device cannot be satisfactorily secured.

Service animals individually trained to assist individuals with disabilities are welcome at no additional charge. Riders must maintain control of their service animals. Certification or registration is not required.

Seat Belts

Passengers are required to wear a seat belt and shoulder strap when available, and keep them secured for the entire trip, until the vehicle is stopped. Failure to use the seat belt shall result in denial of transportation services for that trip. Disability-related requests for reasonable modification will be considered individually.

Children under the age of 8 or under the height of 4’9” must use child restraint systems while riding in the Paratransit vehicle. The adult passenger is responsible for providing a child seat that fits the child appropriately, and properly adjusting the seat for securement (forward/rear facing, shoulder strap height and tightness, etc.). The driver will ensure that the child seat is properly strapped by the seat belt into the vehicle.

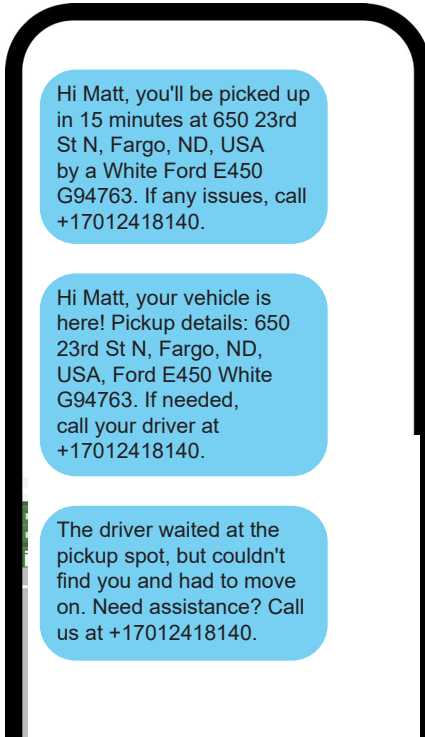
Bags and Packages

Space for packages on the vehicle is limited. Any packages or small carts must be able to be carried on the vehicle in one trip. They must be safely secured while on the vehicle, held onto by the rider or their guest/PCA.

Travel Day Checklist

Ready to ride? Make sure you know these details:

- Date of Ride
- Scheduled Pickup Time
- Trip Window Opens At:
- Return Trip Pickup Time
- Return Trip Window Opens At:
- Am I bringing a PCA or guest(s)?
- How will I be paying?
- Is my mobility device ready to go, and charged (if needed)?
- Where will I wait for my pickup, so that I can see the bus arrive?



Rider Responsibility

All of our Paratransit riders are important to us, and we strive to provide consistent, reliable service.

As a shared-ride service, it is important for Paratransit riders to understand the impact their behavior has on other riders and service delivery. In order to maintain a safe environment and keep trip schedules on time, please review these best practices and expectations.

Best Practices

Keep track of your pickup window time(s).

Cancel rides at least 2 hours in advance if your plans change.

Be ready at the entrance for pickup, with all outerwear and/or bags. Do not expect the driver to wait more than 5 minutes, or request for them to return at another time. This can delay the schedule for other riders assigned to that vehicle for the day.

Keep a clear path. It is the responsibility of the passenger to maintain a clear path to their door, so the driver can provide the appropriate level of service. Please keep sidewalks, ramps or stairs clear of snow and ice. Do not expect the driver to shovel a pathway. This is important for safety and respecting the time of the driver and other passengers.

Behavior

Passengers engaging in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct, or posing a direct threat to others, may be denied service or suspended.

MAT Paratransit will evaluate incidents individually, consider reasonable modifications and provide applicable appeal procedures. Service will not be denied solely because of disability or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy or inconvenience others.



When Things Don't Go As Planned

Severe Weather

Service may be impacted by severe winter weather. The drivers will only travel on roads that are reasonably clear of snow, and service may be canceled during a major snow event.

If you have a trip that will be affected by a service cancellation, reservationists will notify you by phone and/or text message. Cancelations will also be announced on local news media, on matbus.com, and through Rider Alerts. All riders are encouraged to sign up for Rider Alert emails on the MATBUS website.

Cancels, No Shows, and Penalties

Please cancel trips at least two hours in advance. A pattern or practice of no-shows or late cancellations may result in suspension. Incidents beyond the passenger's control will not be counted toward suspension. Passengers may dispute incidents and appeal suspensions. The complete No-Show Policy, including penalties and appeal procedures, is available at MATBUS.com or upon request.

Reasonable Modification

MATBUS will consider all requests for reasonable modification to its policies, practices and procedures to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to transportation services. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in accordance with 49 CFR § 37.169. Requests may also be made at the time of service when advance notice is not practicable.

Language assistance for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) is available free of charge.

To request a reasonable modification or language assistance, contact the MATBUS office at 701-232-7500 Option 3, email transit@matbus.com, or mail your request to 650 23rd St N, Fargo, ND 58102.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

MATBUS provides services without discrimination based on race, color or national origin under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable civil rights laws.

To file a discrimination complaint, request reasonable modifications or obtain additional information, contact the MATBUS Mobility Manager at 701-476-5967 or visit MATBUS.com. Complaints may also be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration. Free language assistance and accessible alternative formats are available upon request.

Questions, Compliments or Complaints

Do you have questions about applying for or using MAT Paratransit?

Contact MATBUS by phone or email, and staff will assist you with any questions you may have. MATBUS also appreciates any suggestions for how to make our website or this document more helpful or accessible for MAT Paratransit riders.

Do you have a compliment or complaint?

MATBUS works to ensure all passengers are provided with the best possible customer service. If you would like to recognize an employee for their customer service skills, or you have experienced less than perfect customer service with MATBUS, we encourage your feedback.

Your feedback may be submitted online with a form on the MATBUS website or through email to paratransit@matbus.com. You may also call 701-235-4464 to speak with a reservationist.

Other Resources

An audio version of this brochure is available upon request.

There may be times when MAT Paratransit is not the most appropriate option to meet your specific transportation need. A list of all Fargo-Moorhead area transportation providers is available on FMRideSource.com. Each listing includes details of the provider's hours and areas of service, types of rides accepted, pricing, and more. A print version of this directory is also available in person at MATBUS facilities or through the mail upon request.

Metro Transit Garage
650 23rd St N
Fargo, ND 58102

Ground Transportation Center
502 NP Ave
Fargo, ND 58102

Phone
701-235-4464
711 Relay (TDD Only)

Email
paratransit@matbus.com

Fax
701-241-8558



THE CITY OF
Fargo
FAR MORE

M
matbus