



GO!BUS

Rider's Guide



Public Transportation for
Senior Citizens and
Persons with Disabilities

Effective July, 2024

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WHAT IS GO!BUS?

GO!BUS IS A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICE.

GO!Bus is a shared ride ADA paratransit service intended to provide a comparable level of transportation to that which is provided by The Rapid fixed-route bus. GO!Bus riders share trips if they are generally traveling in the same direction at the same time. Trips are scheduled without regard to the purpose of the trip.

The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requires transit agencies to provide service comparable to fixed-route service for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from being able to access the fixed-route bus.

The ADA states that The Rapid's regular bus service should be the primary means of public transportation for everyone, including people with disabilities. Under the ADA, GO!Bus will serve as a safety net for only those persons who do not have the functional capability to ride The Rapid's regular buses.

GO!BUS IS AN ADVANCED RESERVATION DOOR-TO-DOOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR ADA ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

- Service operates throughout the greater Grand Rapids area (consult the service area map on the back of this guide) and call 616-456-6141.
- Vehicles pick up passengers at their home or other locations as requested.

THE RAPID MANAGES THE SERVICE.

The Rapid established policies and verifies rider eligibility according to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and its amendments. The Rapid takes trip reservations, schedule rides, and has final responsibility for coordinating operations. The Rapid strives to ensure safe, reliable, and courteous service.

Vans are equipped with wheelchair lifts. GO!Bus vehicles comply with all ADA regulations including wheelchair lift requirements. The lift is designed to hold a wheelchair that is less than 32" wide, less than 48" long and weighs less than 800 lbs. when in use. If a passenger and their mobility device exceed these dimensions, every effort will be made to transport the passenger as long as it is safe to do so.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RIDE?



“INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES”

Individuals who are interested in using this ADA paratransit service must apply through a written application process. The Rapid is responsible for determining eligibility for paratransit service. Paratransit service is not automatic; nor is eligibility recertification. Paratransit service is provided to: “Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities.”

Applications for eligibility may be obtained by calling the GO!Bus office at 616-456-6141, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Applications are also available online at www.ridetherapid.org. The rapid must have an eligibility determination made within 21 days of the receipt of a fully completed application. If the determination has not been made within 21 days, the applicant is presumed eligible and can use the GO!Bus service until eligibility is decided.

“Senior Citizens” Persons 65 years of age or older are eligible. Applicant must complete an application and present proof of age. Proof of age may be in the form of a driver’s license, state of Michigan identification card, birth or baptismal certificate, passport, immigration/naturalization paper, military discharge papers, or verification from the Social Security Administration. (Social Security cards and Medicare cards are not acceptable.)



“PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT” A personal care attendant (PCA) may accompany an ADA eligible passenger at no additional cost. Prior approval required.

“COMPANION” Companions may travel with eligible passengers. The fare for companions is the same as that for the eligible passenger. Arrangements must be made at the time the trip reservation is called into the GO!Bus office, and are based on availability.

“SERVICE ANIMAL” A service animal may also accompany ADA-eligible passengers at no additional cost.

WHERE AND WHEN IS SERVICE AVAILABLE?

REGULAR RAPID SERVICE AREA

GO!Bus operates to and from all points within the 180-mile service area outlined (in yellow) on the map on the back of this guide. This includes six cities in the metropolitan Grand Rapids area plus portions of Alpine and Gaines Township. For more specific information please call the GO!Bus office at 616-456-6141.

GO!Bus SERVICE IS AVAILABLE during the same hours and days that fixed-route has published service available. Please refer to bus schedule for exact times. The first weekday pick-up may be scheduled as early as 5:15 a.m. Weekday trips must be completed no later than 11 p.m. On Saturday, a trip can be scheduled as early as 5:15 a.m. Saturday trips must be completed no later than 10:25 p.m. On Sunday, a trip can be scheduled as early as 7 a.m. Trips on Sunday must be completed no later than 7 p.m. When scheduling GO!Bus trips, please tell the call-taker the time you have to be at your destination and a pick-up time will be generated. The first available vehicle closest to that time can be scheduled for you. For trips scheduled at the end of the day, the time service must be completed by will be entered in for your trip and a pick-up time will be generated. You will not be able to schedule later than that generated time, however, you will be able to schedule earlier if you wish. If fixed-route changes its published scheduled time points, then the GO!Bus times will change to match.

Times for services along Grand Valley State University routes are available online and are only available while GVSU is in session.

SERVICE IS NOT AVAILABLE on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

WHAT IS THE FARE?

ADA ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES are required to pay a fare of \$3.50 per one-way trip. Fares must be paid when boarding the vehicle.

SENIOR CITIZENS AGE 65 AND OLDER who are registered with GO!Bus are required to pay a fare of \$8.00 for each one-way trip. Fares must be paid when boarding the vehicle.

ONCE THE GO!BUS OFFICE DETERMINES A PASSENGER'S ELIGIBILITY, he or she will be informed of the proper fare. Companions traveling with eligible passengers are required to pay the same fare as the eligible passenger. Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) traveling with ADA-eligible passengers are not required to pay a fare.

FARES MUST BE PAID WHEN BOARDING THE VEHICLE, either in the exact cash amount or with the correct ticket. Drivers do not make change, nor do they sell tickets. ADA tickets, sold in strips of 10 and non-disabled senior citizen tickets, sold in strips of 4, may be purchased from all D&W Food stores, Family Fare stores, Meijer stores, and by mail and online at www.ridetherapid.org. Please call the store to verify they have the tickets available. Tickets are also available at Rapid Central Station located at 250 Grandville Ave. SW, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

To purchase tickets by mail, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with a check or money order to:

GO!Bus Tickets

The Rapid

300 Ellsworth Ave. SW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

HOW DO I RESERVE A RIDE?

ALL SERVICE IS ON AN ADVANCE-RESERVATION BASIS.

- Reservations may be made by calling the GO!Bus office at 616-456-6141 during the following hours:
- Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Note: The office is open until 5:00 p.m. for inquiries and checking on trips.)
- Saturday and Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- On holidays when the office is closed, call from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for next day ADA rides only. (Automated phone system)

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE AT LEAST ONE DAY IN ADVANCE AND ARE AVAILABLE UP TO 7 DAYS IN ADVANCE.

- Reservations for the next day must be made by 4:30 p.m. of the previous day.
- Same day service is not available.

STANDING-ORDER RESERVATIONS CAN BE REQUESTED.

- Persons traveling regularly on the same day(s) of the week to and from the same locations at the same times may be able to make a standing-order request once the ride has been established for at least 30 days.
- Standing orders must remain the same for at least 90 days.

- Once made, a standing-order reservation remained in effect until changed or cancelled by the passenger or by The Rapid.
- Excessive cancels or no-shows may result in loss of a standing order.

WHEN YOU CALL TO REQUEST A RIDE, GO!Bus staff needs to know:

- Passenger's name.
- Date service is needed.
- Preferred return time, if a return ride is needed.
- Pick-up address.
- Destination address (and name of destination and location of entrance is possible).
- Whether passenger uses a wheelchair or other mobility aid.
- Any special assistance needs.
- Whether a companion(s), PCA, or service animal will be traveling with passenger.
- Trip times will be negotiated within one hour before and after the preferred time. It is The Rapid's intention to schedule all trips as close to the preferred times as possible and to all passengers picked-up and dropped-off within the on-time window of 25 minutes. Passengers must be ready and waiting for the vehicle at the beginning of the window given.

FOR MEDICAL TRIPS ONLY, reservations will be accepted without a set return time. Let the call-taker know you will need a ride from your medical appointment at the time you schedule your trip. This type of trip is known as a will-call.

- These passengers must call the GO!Bus office only when ready to leave the location, and a vehicle will be dispatched to pick them up.
- The vehicle should arrive within 1 hour.

WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL OR RESCHEDULE?

TO CANCEL A RIDE

- Passengers who must cancel should call the GO!Bus office (616-456-6141) no later than 30 minutes from beginning of window given.
- Drivers are NOT authorized to accept cancellations in reservations.

TO RESCHEDULE OR MAKE CHANGES IN RIDE RESERVATIONS

- Passengers who must reschedule or make changes in their ride reservations must call the GO!Bus office (616-456-6141) at least the day before the trip is scheduled. Same day changes are NOT accepted.
- Drivers are not authorized to accept changes in reservations.
- GO!Bus does not accommodate “ready early” trips

NO SHOW POLICY

IDENTIFYING, RECORDING AND SUSPENSION OF SERVICE

Policy: A No-Show is defined as any uncompleted trip that is caused by the client not being at the appointed pick-up location, at the appointed pick-up time, ready to travel. No-Shows cause a disruption of service and needless expense. For that reason, any person with a pattern of repeated No-Shows (three (3) or more no shows that equal 10% or more of their trips within thirty (30) days) may have GO!Bus transportation suspended.

Procedure for identifying a No-Show: All GO!Bus passengers are required to be at the designated pick-up location, ready to travel, at beginning of window given.

Drivers will be required to wait a maximum of five (5) minutes after arrival prior to moving on.

Before moving on, drivers are required to contact their dispatcher to verify the address/location. Drivers are expected to make all reasonable efforts to locate and transport the passenger(s). Only in cases where the driver can establish with certainty that the passenger is not and will not be available to take the trip within the allotted five (5) minutes waiting time is it permissible to depart the pick-up location sooner than the scheduled pick-up time.

Return trip reservations for passengers who are “No-Shows” on their “going” trip will be canceled by the GO!Bus offices, unless the passengers requests otherwise. In all cases, if and when the passenger calls for a return ride, the trip will be performed and treated as a “will-call”.

Passenger(s) not present to board the vehicle within 5 minutes after it arrives within the on-time window, will be considered a “No-Show.” Cancellations received within 30 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time are also considered a “No-Show.” If the vehicle arrives late, after the end of the window, the passenger(s) will not be considered a No-Show if they choose not to go or if they cannot be found.

Procedure for recording a No-Show: Contracted carries and/or their designees should always enter into the scheduling software system any no-show as it occurs. The GO!Bus office can verify that the driver was at the exact location

listed at the proper time should the client call concerning their trip or wish to reinstate their return trip.

GO!Bus will record the trip status onto the client's trip record with any note that can explain the circumstances surrounding the No-Show.

GO!Bus will maintain a history of each client's trip record. At any time, GO!Bus will be able to produce a record of each client's completed trips, cancellations and No-Shows.

Procedure for Suspension of Service: If at least three (3) trips equal to 10% or more of the client's trips are No-Showed within a thirty (30) day period, a written warning will be issued. This warnings explains the No-Show policy and gives the recipient a chance to contact the GO!Bus office regarding what might be changed to eliminate excessive No-Shows. **A suspension will not be based on any No-Shows beyond the rider's control or on any trip missed due to Go!Bus error or lateness.**

If the client has an (one) additional no-show within the 30-day period following the first warning letter, a second written warning will be issued. This warning explains the no-show policy and gives the recipient a chance to contact the GO!Bus office regarding what might be changed to eliminate excessive no-shows. **A suspension will not be based on any no-shows beyond the rider's control or on any trip missed due to GO!Bus error or lateness.**

If the client has an (one) additional no-show within the 30 day period following the second warning letter, a two (2) week suspension will be instated. The suspension will be scheduled to start 14 days after the date of the suspension letter. **A suspension will not be based on any "no-shows" beyond the rider's control or on any trip missed due to GO!Bus error or lateness.**

Should the client wish to appeal this process, or feels they have been discriminated against, they have the right to be heard through the Appeals Process policies, a copy of which will be enclosed with the suspension letter.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

GO!BUS PASSENGERS SHOULD:

- Wait in a safe, well-lit location.
- Choose a pick-up and drop-off location that allows the driver to not lose sight of the vehicle when assisting you to or from the door.
- Be ready to travel at the beginning of window scheduled.
- Let the vehicle come to a complete stop before approaching.
- Allow the driver to assist you in boarding the vehicle; ask for special assistance if you need it.
- Take care of all personal belongings; they are your responsibility.
- Any items found on the vehicle will be returned to base when the driver is done with the route. The passenger will be responsible to pick-up the item at that location during regular business hours (8:30-4:30 M-F)
- Be able to load and unload your own belongings (two grocery size bag limit)
- Wear seatbelts at all times.
- Not eat, drink or smoke in the vehicle.
- Be prepared and able to sit in the vehicle for the shared ride trip duration.
- Display no disruptive behavior or risk suspension.
- Not request unscheduled stops.
- Be dressed properly, including shoes and shirts.
- Understand no special requests for specific drivers or vehicles can be honored.
- Treat driver and other passengers with respect and courtesy.

Tipping of drivers is not required, nor permitted. Concerns about the rider's responsibilities or GO!Bus service should be directed immediately to the GO!Bus office so that appropriate follow-up action can be taken. We encourage your questions, suggestions, complaints, and comments. Please call us at 616-456-6141.

DRIVER ASSISTANCE

Drivers are:

- Not required to carry the passengers' belongings.
- Not required to assist wheelchairs up/down more than one step (up to 8").
- Not required to push wheelchairs through grass, sand, mud, ice or snow or any other debris.
- Not required to do any lifting of the passenger.
- Not required to go in buildings.

Drivers will:

- Assist the passenger from the ground floor entry door at their place of pickup to the vehicle and from the vehicle to the ground floor entry door at their destination. Such assistance cannot interfere with the driver being able to maintain sight of the vehicle.
- Assist wheelchair passengers up/down one step up to 8" in height if it can be done safely, in using the wheelchair lift and in securing their wheelchair in the vehicle.
- Be courteous.
- Drive safely.
- Wear a seatbelt.
- Securely tie down wheelchairs.
- Be properly uniformed.
- Make a good faith effort to find a client (horn honking to notify a client of arrival is NOT acceptable).

DRIVERS

Drivers must have a safe driving record, pass a criminal background check, be able to pass a Department of Transportation physical and test negative for drugs and alcohol. Also, they are trained in defensive driving, and to safely assist and be sensitive to passengers' special needs.

Drivers are selected based on their ability to provide the specialized service needed for the paratransit program.

Traffic delays, tight schedules, weather conditions, passengers running late and other factors can cause stressful situations that could affect the quality of service for paratransit customers. If a driver or passenger acts in an unreasonable manner (or contrary to our policies and procedures) the problem should be reported.

THE RAPID'S OTHER MOBILITY SERVICES

TRAVEL TRAINING PROGRAM

The Rapid provides a program which teaches individuals to use The Rapid's regular route buses independently. For more information on this free program, please call 616-356-1138.

REGULAR ROUTE BUS SERVICE

All of The Rapid's regular route buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts or have low floors. The bus offers flexibility to passengers and is economical. For information on this service, including special rates for ADA eligible passengers, please call The Rapid Information Center at 616-776-1100 (or if you are hearing impaired, call the TDD line at 616-774-1186).

PASS

Passenger Adaptive Suburban Service (PASS) is a suburban feeder shuttle that transports passengers from their curb to The Rapid fixed-route system.

Reservations must be made before 4:30 p.m. the day before and the fare is \$3.50 which includes a transfer to the fixed-route bus. For more information on this program, please call 616-459-7701.

NOTIFICATION OF YOUR RIGHTS

NOTIFICATION OF YOUR RIGHTS UNDER TITLE VI

The Rapid fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The Rapid operates without regard to race, color, national origin. Any person who believes him/herself, or any specific class of persons, to be subject to discrimination prohibited by Title VI may by him/herself or by representative file a written complaint with The Rapid. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination and contain the following information.

- Name, address, and phone number of the Complaint.
- Name, address, phone number and relationship of Representative to Complaint (if applicable).
- Basis of complaint (i.e., race, color, national origin).
- Date of alleged discriminatory act(s).
- A statement of the complaint, including specific details, relevant facts and documentation.

Please submit Title VI complaints to The Rapid by mail.

Mail

Attention:

Planning Department

300 Ellsworth SW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

NOTIFICATION OF YOUR RIGHT TO REASONABLE MODIFICATION

The Rapid provides reasonable modifications to individuals with disabilities by making changes to policies, practices, and procedures if needed by an individual with a disability to enable him or her to participate in The Rapid's services subject to several exceptions. These exceptions include when the modification would cause a direct threat to the health or safety of others, would result in a fundamental alteration of the service, would not actually be necessary in order for the individual with a disability to access The Rapids' service or would result in an undue financial or administrative burden.

Requests for reasonable modification must include the following:

- Name:
- Address:
- Preferred phone number:
- Disability:
- Policy/process that you are requesting modification of:
- What modification of the policy do you need?
- Why do you need the modification in order to allow you to use the service?

The request from the individual with a disability should be as specific as possible and include information on why the requested modification is needed in order to allow the individual to use the transportation provider's service.

Please submit a request for reasonable modification by mail:

Mail

Attention:

The Rapid

333 Wealthy St. SW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503