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Monterey-Salinas Transit

MST RIDES

ADA Paratransit Program
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Revised February 2014
MONTEREY-SALINAS TRANSIT
CUSTOMERS

Monterey-Salinas Transit provides a variety of fixed-route services to meet the transit needs of the communities it serves. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Monterey-Salinas Transit operates a fleet of fully accessible fixed-route vehicles. Seniors and individuals with disabilities can ride MST fixed-route buses at a reduced fare. People with physical, visual, or cognitive impairments that prevent them from using the fixed-route system for some or all of their transit trips may qualify for MST RIDES ADA paratransit service.

FIXED-ROUTE BUS SERVICE

All MST buses are fully accessible and offer the following accessible features:

- Boarding ramps and/or lifts to assist passengers who use wheelchairs or have difficulty climbing steps
- Reserved wheelchair securement spaces on buses
- Drivers trained to assist with securing wheeled mobility devices
- Priority seating near the front of the bus designated for seniors and people with disabilities
- Audible stop announcements
RIDES ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE

RIDES ADA paratransit is accessible transportation for people with physical, visual or cognitive impairments that prevent them from making some or all of their trips on fixed-route buses in accordance with the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA).

RIDES ADA paratransit is a shared-ride transportation service that operates in the same areas and during the same days and hours as the fixed-route bus service. A request for transportation must be reserved at least one day in advance. Boarding assistance is available upon request at the time the trip is reserved.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

RIDES ADA paratransit service is for individuals who meet eligibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The applicant must complete the certification process and be found eligible in accordance with ADA guidelines.

An applicant may be eligible for RIDES ADA paratransit service if, as a result of their disability or health-related condition:

- Is unable to independently travel to or from fixed-route stops or stations within the service area; or

- Is unable to independently board, ride or exit an accessible fixed-route (bus) vehicle; or
• Cannot independently “navigate the system”. (Example: A person who cannot recognize bus stops, understand how to complete bus trips, determine the fare, etc.)

The disability or condition must meet ADA requirements for certification.

**TYPES OF CERTIFICATION**

**Unconditional** – This level of eligibility allows one to use ADA paratransit services for any trip in the MST-defined service area because their disability prevents them from using MST fixed-route services under most circumstances.

**Conditional** – This level of eligibility is for individuals with disabilities that allow them to use MST fixed-route services under some conditions but not all. These individuals may use ADA paratransit services for trips not reasonably taken on a MST fixed-route coach. These conditions are stated in the RIDES certification letter provided to the customer.

**CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

An applicant must complete a *Contact Information Form*. In addition, a *Professional Verification Form* must be completed by a California State licensed health care provider that can attest to the applicant’s disability or limitations related to riding fixed-route buses. This licensed professional must be trained specifically in assessing the disability or limitations for which the applicant is stating their eligibility. Both forms must be
signed and mailed to MST; no copies or facsimiles will be accepted.

The forms and a Rides brochure are available at www.mstmobility.org or can be requested by calling MST at 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871). When the completed forms are received and reviewed, the applicant will be contacted by telephone to schedule an in-person interview that may include a short bus trip with a MST Mobility Specialist. The in-person interview may take up to one hour.

(Note: If an applicant is unable to complete an in-person interview within 90 days of submitting both completed forms, the applicant may be required to provide a new Professional Verification Form before being scheduled for an interview).

There are two parts to the in-person interview process:

1) An MST eligibility specialist will ask the applicant questions to assess the applicant’s ability to use both fixed-route and Rides services safely.

2) Applicant will take a short walk to a nearby bus stop and take a short bus ride. An MST Mobility Specialist will observe how the applicant navigates various aspects of the short trip including inclines, curbs and curb cuts, and street crossing. Abilities such as strength, coordination, balance, range of motion, and cognition will also be evaluated. An applicant’s ability to use the Rides service safely will be closely examined. Upon completing the interview, an eligibility determination letter will be
mailed to the applicant within 21 days from the date of the in-person assessment.

RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

Recertification for RIDES ADA paratransit is required for each participant prior to the expiration of participant’s current eligibility. The MST RIDES office will attempt to notify participants of their recertification requirement between 60 and 90 days prior to their expiration date. The certification expiration date is also stated on the previous certification letter as well as on the MST-issued RIDES photo ID card. It is the applicant’s responsibility to assure that MST has a current contact information and to recertify in a timely manner regardless of whether or not MST has successfully reached the applicant.

Please call MST at 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871) if you move or change your telephone number, or no longer require ADA paratransit service.

(Note: The certification process may take 60 days or more so do not delay in submitting application materials).

LENGTH OF CERTIFICATION

Certification can be for a few weeks or for several years, depending upon several factors. Customers who qualify with a condition(s) that is not likely to improve may receive a lifetime certification. Persons with temporary conditions, or conditions with uncertain outcomes, may be issued a certification ranging from a few weeks up to three years. MST reserves the right to require
recertification before an expiration date if indicated to comply with changing regulations or operating conditions.

APPEALING ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

An applicant who does not agree with the eligibility determination may appeal the decision. The appeal must be in writing and received by MST within 60 days of the date of the determination letter.

Address the appeal to the following:

Monterey-Salinas Transit
Attn: RIDES Certification
150 Del Monte Avenue
Monterey, CA 93940

The letter must include the reason why the applicant disagrees with the eligibility determination.

SERVICE FOR VISITORS

Visitors to Monterey County who have been determined eligible for ADA paratransit service by another transit system can use MST RIDES ADA paratransit for up to 21 days within a 365-day period. Visitors will be required to provide eligibility verification from the transit system in which they are currently registered.

PHOTO ID REQUIREMENT

To ensure that only certified MST RIDES customers use the service, the RIDES vehicle operator must be able to
accurately identify each rider boarding the vehicle. Therefore, MST will issue you a RIDES photo ID when you first certify or when you recertify. (Eligible visitors can offer a photo ID issued by a government agency.)

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Service is designed to be “comparable to” (or similar to) the fixed-route bus service. For this reason, it operates in the same areas, on the same days, and at the same times as the fixed-route bus service.

SERVICE AREA

MST ADA paratransit service is provided within a service corridor that extends ¾ of a mile from any of MST’s fixed-route services. Both points of departure and destination of each trip must be within a RIDES ¾-mile service corridor.

SERVICE HOURS

RIDES ADA Paratransit services are available whenever MST’s regular fixed-route bus service is in operation along the ¾ corridor. MST’s fixed-route schedules are subject to change.

SERVICE FARES

Fares are set by the Monterey-Salinas Transit Board of Directors and are subject to change (see service fare insert).

Exact fare in the form of cash or RIDES tickets is required. MST RIDES vehicle operators do not have the ability to make change. RIDES tickets may be purchased
at [www.mst.org](http://www.mst.org), by telephone at 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871), or in person at the following MST customer service locations:

**Salinas Transit Center**
110 Salinas Street
Salinas, CA 93901

**Marina Transit Exchange**
280 Reservation Road
Marina, CA 93933

**MST Bus Stop Shop**
150 Del Monte Avenue
Monterey, CA 93940
(This location also accepts orders by mail)

**RESERVING A PARATRANSIT TRIP**
You may make a reservation up to **seven (7) days** in advance of your trip. There are no restrictions on the trip purpose. Please have the following information ready when you call to make a reservation:

1) Your first and last name and RIDES ID number
2) The date you need to ride
3) The street address where you need to be picked up
4) The street address where you are going
5) The time you would like to arrive, (e.g., appointment time)
6) The time you will be ready to be picked up for a return trip
7) Whether you use a mobility aid, such as a cane, walker, wheelchair or scooter. (This will provide additional information regarding the type of seating that will be reserved for you.)

8) If you have a personal care attendant or guest(s) that will be traveling with you. (No more than three (3) children are allowed to ride, children 46” and under ride free with a paying passenger. Children under age 5 must be accompanied by a fare-paying passenger)

9) If any of your contact information has changed, (i.e., mailing address or telephone numbers), please provide current information to the RIDES reservationist.

Due to variations in vehicle availability, MST RIDES may need to schedule a pick up or drop off time within an hour of the time requested. There is also a 15-minute “ready window” on either side of the assigned pick up or drop off time that the RIDES vehicle may arrive. There is no same-day service.

SCHEDULING TIPS

• When you call to schedule a trip(s), please have a pen and paper handy to write down the reservation information.

• Have all of the information for each trip available when calling. This will help reservationist provide more efficient service. Allow extra time for the trip if not certain of exactly when a return pick up is needed.

• If the trip is for an appointment, remember to allow some extra time to get from the MST RIDES vehicle to the final destination.
• Likewise, allow time to get to the place where the MST RIDES vehicle will arrive for the return trip.

WHEN TO CALL
RIDES will accept reservations between 8 AM and 5 PM weekdays and between 9 AM and 5 PM on weekends. The more advanced notice provided the better chance of getting the time slot desired. It is generally recommended that a trip be scheduled as soon as the need for paratransit service is known.

To schedule or cancel a trip, call:

From Salinas      (831) 754-2804
From Monterey      (831) 373-1393

If an automated recording begins the caller will be given instructions on how to schedule or cancel a trip.

WHERE TO CATCH THE RIDES VEHICLE
MST offers “last-door-to-first-door” service. This means each MST RIDES customer needing assistance to or from a RIDES bus to the first door of their destination may request such assistance when making a trip reservation (but no later than 5:00 PM the day before the scheduled trip). MST RIDES vehicles do not enter residential driveways, travel off paved roads, or travel on private property.

VEHICLE ARRIVALS
MST RIDES vehicles are expected to arrive within fifteen (±15) minutes of the scheduled pick up time. Vehicles will wait at the curbside for no more than five (5) minutes for
a passenger to board. If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the 15 minute ready window, call MST RIDES at (831) 754-2804 or (831) 373-1393.

RETURN TRIPS

When most customers schedule a trip with MST RIDES, they usually request a round trip reservation. Although it can be difficult to estimate how much time is needed for a particular appointment, it is important to remember that if the appointment runs overtime, a return trip may be missed. It is always a good idea to schedule a return trip late enough to assure being ready to travel when the RIDES vehicle arrives. This is especially important for dialysis appointments. Should a return trip be missed, the customer will have to make alternative transportation arrangements.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

RIDES subscription service allows customers to submit a “standing order” for trips that occur on a routine basis, i.e., trips to and from work, school, dialysis treatments, etc. However, subscription service may not be available under some circumstances.

If you are receiving subscription service, it is important to let a RIDES reservationist know in advance if a ride is not needed on a particular day. (Example: A trip is not needed on a holiday or when on vacation) This will help RIDES avoid unnecessary trips thereby keeping cost down.

(Note: If a trip is not cancelled two (2) hours before scheduled the subscriber will be charged with a “no
show” which can result in loss of service for a period of time for repeated occurrences.)

CANCELLATION/NO-SHOW POLICY

It is important to remember that every time a trip is scheduled, MST RIDES will send a bus to the desired pick up location. If a customer fails to show up for a scheduled trip, or cancels a trip without a two-hour notice, an important resource is wasted that potentially deprives another customer of the use of the service for that time slot.

To cancel a scheduled ride, customers should contact MST RIDES dispatch at 831-754-2804 or 831-373-1393.

Late cancellations and “no shows” cause a tremendous strain on system resources. Please be considerate of other’s needs too.

Failure to cancel a scheduled trip within two (2) hours of the scheduled pickup-time will be considered a “no show” event.

A “no show” will be recorded into the customer’s transportation record for the following reasons:

1. The trip is cancelled by the customer or their designee with less than two (2) hours notice,

2. The vehicle arrives within the ready window but the customer fails to board within five (5) minutes, or
3. The vehicle arrives within the ready window, but the driver is unable to locate the customer at the requested pick-up location within five (5) minutes.

**Penalties for No-Shows and Late Cancellations**

1. ‘No shows” that exceed 10 percent of the scheduled trips in any month shall be considered a violation of MST’s “no show” trip cancellation policy.

2. Upon the first occurrence of a violation, a warning letter shall be issued to the RIDES passenger.

3. Should any subsequent violations occur, the passenger shall be denied service for a period of time as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Delinquencies</th>
<th>Suspension Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10%</td>
<td>5-Day Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;20%</td>
<td>10-Day Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;30%</td>
<td>15-Day Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;40%</td>
<td>20-Day Suspension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The passenger will receive a 30-day written notice of an impending suspension.

5. Passengers scheduling fewer than ten (10) trips in any month may be exempt from policy violation penalties at the discretion of MST.

APPEALING A NO SHOW CHARGE

A passenger who believes that a “no show” event has been recorded into their transportation record in error, may appeal that entry by contacting MST at 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871) or may submit a request for appeal in writing:

Monterey-Salinas Transit  
Attn: CTSA Manager  
150 Del Monte Avenue  
Monterey, CA. 93940

Circumstances of each violation will be reviewed and investigated on a case-by-case basis, and a written decision shall be issued to the appellant within ten (10) business days.

APPEALING A NOTICE OF SUSPENSION

Passengers may appeal a notice of suspension by providing a written request for a hearing within 15 days from the date of the suspension letter. Passengers should address the written request to:
Once a request for an appeal is received, MST’s general manager/CEO, or his/her designated representative, shall notify the appellant of a hearing date. If the appellant or designated representative is not present at the hearing, a decision will be based on the written documentation submitted. The general manager/CEO or his/her designated representative shall provide the appellant with a written final ruling within 15 days of the hearing date. The appellant will be able to continue to make reservations and utilize the service pending this review. Subsequent “no shows” during the appeal process will also be considered in the final penalty determination.

CONDUCT ABOARD MST RIDES POLICY

Passengers are required to follow MST Rules of Conduct to ensure the safety and comfort of all passengers and the RIDES ADA paratransit operator. Therefore, riders, companions, and personal care attendants MUST NOT

1) Eat, drink or smoke on board
2) Use sound-generating electronic equipment without ear phones or a headset and only then if
the volume is low enough as to not disturb other passengers or the coach operator
3) Shout, sing or talk loudly including on cell phones
4) Use abusive, threatening, or obscene language
5) Harass other riders or operators or use racial, religious, sexual, gender, or age-related disparaging speech
6) Carry fireworks, flammable liquids, or weapons aboard the vehicle
7) Commit or threaten violent or other illegal actions
8) Discharge bodily fluids, ride with open wounds, or fail to maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene, including foul orders or strong scents such as perfumes, colognes and aftershave applications
9) Evade fare payment
10) Distract the coach operator or interfere with the vehicle equipment
11) Leave seat while the vehicle is in motion

MST RIDES recognizes that an individual’s disability or medical condition may cause a passenger to unknowingly and/or unintentionally violate the rules aboard MST RIDES policy. For this reason, MST looks at each violation individually.

Rules that apply to all MST coaches and buses also apply to RIDES vehicles and they include:

12. Pets are not allowed except in caged carriers
13. Articles over 5 feet in length are prohibited.
14. No smoking within 20 feet of buses.
15. All passengers must wear a shirt and shoes
16. Babies must be removed from strollers and held securely while strollers and shopping carts must be folded and placed out of the aisle.
17. Passengers must comply with all coach operator requests including but not limited rules 1-16.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS (PCA)
A personal care attendant (PCA) is someone designated by a registered RIDES customer, or specifically employed to help the customer, to meet his/her travel needs. Registered PCA(s) may use MST RIDES services without charge when they are accompanying a certified RIDES customer.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS RESPONSIBILITIES
Accompany riders who are physically, mentally or cognitively impaired such that they cannot safely be left alone on a RIDES vehicle or at either the pick-up or drop-off location.
These riders may travel without an attendant only as long as they exhibit safe behavior in the vehicle and are able to care for themselves. The RIDES vehicle driver cannot act as an attendant for these riders.

(NOTE: If the PCA or passenger’s guardian have been warned about allowing such an at-risk passenger to ride alone and the practice continues, service to the rider may be suspended and the situation reported to child or adult protective services)

REGISTERING OF PCA’S
Designated PCA’s will be registered once applicants have completed the RIDES application interview. To obtain a PCA identification card, visit the MST RIDES Office located at 150 Del Monte Avenue, in Monterey.

PCA’S BOARDING MST RIDES VEHICLES

In order for a registered PCA to board an MST RIDES vehicle they must:

1. Accompany a registered MST RIDES customer.

2. Present their PCA photo ID card to the MST RIDES vehicle operator when boarding.

If a PCA does not present a valid PCA photo ID card to the MST RIDES vehicle operator, they must pay full fare. MST RIDES vehicle operators will verify that any PCA accompanying eligible customers are in fact those persons as stated on the PCA’s photo ID card.

In order to ensure there is adequate room for PCAs on the MST RIDES vehicle, customers must notify the MST RIDES dispatch office that a PCA will accompany the customer when the trip is scheduled.

SERVICE ANIMALS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 1990 requires public transportation agencies such as MST to allow people with disabilities to bring service animals onto public transportation vehicles.
Service animals include guide dogs, signal dogs, or other animals individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. MST RIDES vehicle operators may exclude any animal when that animal’s presence poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Each situation will be considered individually.

GUEST

In addition to the customer’s registered personal care attendant, one other individual may accompany an MST RIDES passenger as a companion on a per-trip basis provided they have the same origin and destination as the RIDES passenger, there is adequate space available for them on the vehicle, and that it will not result in a denial of service to another MST RIDES customer. Advise the MST RIDES dispatch office of the number of companion(s) that are expected to accompany the customer on the trip when the trip is scheduled. Each request for service for additional companion(s) will be considered on an individual basis dependent upon available space. All companions shall pay full fare.

MOBILITY AID SPECIFICATION

All MST RIDES vehicles are equipped with industry-standard lifts that have a minimum lifting capacity of 600 pounds. In order to ensure the safety of all MST RIDES customers and that of the vehicle operators, the following policy is in force:

1. The MST RIDES program shall carry the wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can safely accommodate the wheelchair and occupant.
2. MST may decline to carry a wheelchair occupant on any RIDES program vehicle if the combined weight exceeds that of the lift specifications, or if the carriage of the wheelchair is inconsistent with MST safety requirements.

3. MST shall not permit a wheelchair to ride in places other than designated securement locations in the vehicle.

4. The MST RIDES program shall carry individuals with a disability who use a Segway as a mobility device and shall permit the individual to use the lift when boarding the vehicle. MST shall not permit Segways to be stored on the vehicle other than designated securement locations in the vehicle.

**CARRY-ON BAGGAGE**

Baggage is limited to items carried by the customer and must not block the aisle. No baggage shall have any dimension in excess of five feet in length. Fishing rods must have the hooks removed.

**RIDES VEHICLES**

Most RIDES trips are provided on small MST buses. However, some trips may be provided with vans, sedans or taxis under contract with MST RIDES. MST staff will assign the most appropriate vehicle for each trip. Customers may not request any particular type of vehicle.
CUSTOMER SERVICE CONTACT

Should you require any additional information about the MST RIDES program, or have a comment or service complaint, please contact MST at:

**Monterey-Salinas Transit**
150 Del Monte Avenue
Monterey, CA 93940
Phone: 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871)
TDD: Hearing impaired: (831) 393-8111

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FREE TRAVEL TRAINING

MST offers free travel training to all customers whether they use MST fixed-route buses, RIDES buses, or both. Call 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871) for information or email info@mstmobiity.org.
MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC)
The MAC advises the MST Board of Directors and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) on matters of broad interest to persons with transportation challenges in Monterey County. Members are appointed by the MST Board of Directors and include both consumers and social service professionals who can represent a cross section of the county’s population with travel challenges.

ADA PARATRANSPORT RIDES (ADAPT-R)
The ADAPT-R is a standing subcommittee of the MAC that provides advice on matters specifically related to the MST Rides ADA paratransit program. Members are appointed by the MAC chairperson and can include both MAC members and non-MAC members who are qualified to represent the needs of Rides consumers.

Both the MAC and the ADAPT-R meetings are open to the public and guests are welcome. For more information, visit www.mstmobility.org/advisory-committee or contact MST via email at info@mstmobilityt.org.