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MCAT



RIDE GUIDE

Middlesex County Area Transit
Sponsored by:
The Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Middlesex County Area Transit
711 Jersey Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901



The Middlesex County Area Transit (MCAT) program, the passenger transportation division of the Middlesex County Department of Community Services, Office on Aging and Disabled Services, provides transportation for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and the general public. The Middlesex County Community Shuttle program provides scheduled services that do not require advance reservation.

- Shuttle route information can be obtained from the driver or by visiting the following websites:
<http://co.middlesex.nj.us/awts/communityshuttle.asp>
www.hopstop.com
www.kmm.org

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

OFFICE

Days: Monday - Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Telephone: 732-745-7456
Fax: 732-296-0320



RESERVATIONS

Days: Monday - Friday
Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Telephone: 1-800-221-3520, Press 1 for the menu and then Press 2 to schedule a trip.
TTY/TTD: 732-745-8905
No Reservations taken after 4:00 p.m.

CANCELLATIONS

Days: 7 days a week
Hours: 24 hours a day
Telephone: 1-800-221-3520, Press 1 for the menu, then Press 1 to cancel a trip. (Be sure to include your full name, ID number, and the day(s) and date(s) of trips being cancelled.)

TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

Days: Monday - Friday
Hours: First scheduled pick-up: 8:00 a.m.
Last scheduled return pick-up: 3:30 p.m.
(Limited service from 3:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.)



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Fares

A one-way fare of \$3.00 (\$6.00 roundtrip) is charged for passengers who are transported on MCAT advance reservation trips.

- No cash will be accepted by the drivers.
- Passengers must pre-purchase tickets by calling 732-745-4825

TRANSPORTATION PARAMETERS

Transportation is provided to senior citizens (60 years of age and older) and persons with disabilities. MCAT also provides shuttle service for the general public who reside in Middlesex County. The general purpose of the program is to make transportation available and accessible so that the participants may obtain the necessities of life.

- Transportation is available on a FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED basis.
- Transportation is provided within Middlesex County and up to 5 miles outside the County as a shared ride.
- All transportation is curb-to-curb and shared with other passengers.
- Feeder transportation service to accessible fixed-route transportation services (bus and rail) is available.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Many municipalities provide some type of transportation for their senior and disabled residents. Information can be obtained by calling your local municipal offices. All intra-municipal trips should first be requested of the municipality. Only if the municipality **cannot** transport will MCAT provide the transportation.

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

To register a compliment or a comment, telephone 732-296-1647 or write to the Middlesex County Division of Transportation, 711 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

Any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals.

The rule permits the use of trained miniature horses as alternatives to dogs. (35.136)

Special Trips

Limited transportation is available on evenings, Monday-Friday, 6:00-9:30 p.m., and Saturdays, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. to civic organizations for educational purposes. Additional information is available by calling 732-296-7390.

No Service Days

New Year's Day



Martin Luther King's Birthday

Lincoln's Birthday

Presidents' Day (Washington's Birthday)

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

General Election Day

Veterans' Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Day



- Dialysis transportation is provided to Middlesex County locations only.
- Requests for service will be met as resources permit.
- Individuals must register with MCAT in order to request a ride.
- MCAT has the responsibility to take reasonable action necessary to maintain order and safety on a vehicle, including but not limited to denying services to any passenger who violates policies.

INFORMATION NEEDED TO REGISTER FOR SERVICE

- First and Last Name
- Home Address and Mailing Address
- Telephone Number
- Emergency Contact Name and Daytime Telephone Number
- Date of Birth
- Sex
- Disabilities - ambulatory/non-ambulatory
- Race *
- Estimated Household Income *

*(Information required by government funding source)

INFORMATION NEEDED TO SCHEDULE TRANSPORTATION

Passengers who want to schedule a trip must provide:

- Date of appointment
- Time of appointment
- Time to return home
- Destination address including zip code
- Doctor's name, clinic name, company name, etc.
- Telephone number and extension of destination



TO CANCEL A RIDE

Telephone 24 hours a day, but no less than 90 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time. Telephone 1-800-221-3520 and Press 1 for the menu and then Press 1 for cancellations. Leave your ID number, first and last name, and day(s) and date(s) of trip(s) being cancelled.

EMERGENCY CANCELLATIONS OF SERVICE BY THE COUNTY

Every effort is made to telephone passengers as early as possible if transportation must be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control. Cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergencies are announced on 1450 WCTC AM and Magic 98.3 FM radio stations between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.

vehicle operator to cease engaging in disruptive behavior on the vehicle.

- Depending on the severity of the situation, the passenger may be suspended or terminated from riding with MCAT. Before a passenger may return from a suspension, the passenger must be willing to sign an agreement that he or she will discontinue the inappropriate behavior and understands continued inappropriate behavior could mean formal termination of services.
- If a passenger physically or verbally abuses a member of the staff or another passenger, or otherwise engages in disruptive behavior, the vehicle operator must notify Dispatch of the incident. Management shall determine the appropriate action, which may include notification to police or suspension of service and shall give such notice to the offending passenger in writing.
- Passengers may appeal the imposed action. All appeal requests must be submitted in writing to the Office Director, 711 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Requests to rescind the action may result in a fair hearing sponsored by the Office Director within (10) working days after request is received.

passenger, or attempting to exit the vehicle while it is stopped at a traffic light, a stop sign, due to traffic ahead of it, or while it is moving;

- o Distracting the operator of the vehicle by speech, sound, or action, including, but not limited to, shouting, screaming, cursing, spitting, kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, pulling, insulting, bullying, assaulting or harassing another passenger or the vehicle operator;
- o Refusing to wear a seat belt, or prematurely releasing or getting out of a seat belt;
- o Refusing to exit a vehicle at designated drop off;
- o Making any physical or verbal threats towards any passenger or vehicle operator;
- o Engaging in dangerous conduct or activity towards self or another;
- o Smoking, eating or drinking while on board vehicle;
- o Damaging the vehicle or the personal property of any passenger on the vehicle;
- o Refusing to comply with orders of the

CANCELLATION is defined as a scheduled pick up which is formally withdrawn by the passenger. Therefore, if you have a 10:00 a.m. scheduled appointment that you must cancel, a phone call should be made by 8:30 a.m. to MCAT to cancel the trip.

A **NO SHOW** is defined as any occurrence when a passenger who has scheduled a ride fails to cancel the trip at least ninety (90) minutes prior to the scheduled appointment time, declines to take the ride or is not present when the driver arrives to pick up the passenger at the designated time and location. Failure to cancel a scheduled appointment initiates a **NO SHOW**, three no shows in a two-month period may lead to a thirty (30) day suspension which can eventually result in a loss of transportation services.

PASSENGER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Always identify yourself with your ID number when you telephone.
- Always take down the name of the staff person you spoke to.
- Schedule transportation for an appointment no earlier than fourteen (14) calendar days and no less than three (3) full business days before your appointment.

Example/Definition: If you telephone on a Monday, you can obtain a Thursday trip. Monday - You telephone to schedule your transportation appointment.

Tuesday - Day 1

Wednesday - Day 2

Thursday is the day of your trip.

- Due to the high volume of trips it is best to call fourteen (14) days in advance of your trip.
- Cell phones should be turned off while being transported.
- Provide exact addresses and telephone numbers for both pick up and drop off locations.
- Cancel transportation appointments at least 90 minutes prior to scheduled appointment time.
- Frequent cancellations will result in a review of future transportation requests.
- Be ready 30 minutes prior to your scheduled pick-up time to meet the vehicle at the curb.
- Return pick up may be up to 30 minutes past the scheduled return pick-up time.
- Telephone only if you will be late for your return trip.
- Stay seated while the vehicle is in motion.
- Wear seat belts at all times.

DISRUPTIVE OR OTHERWISE INAPPROPRIATE PASSENGER BEHAVIOR

- If a passenger engages in disruptive behavior, the vehicle operator shall initially warn the passenger verbally and direct the passenger to stop engaging in such conduct. The vehicle operator then shall immediately contact Dispatch or other office staff and complete a written report concerning the incident.
- “Disruptive behavior” is defined for use in this Guide as being any action which impinges on the rights, privacy or physical and/or emotional well being of others, any action by a passenger that poses significant risk of harm to the health or safety of anyone in the vehicle, including the passenger who is engaging in disruptive behavior, any other passenger, and/or the MCAT vehicle operator, and includes, but is not limited to such conduct and behavior as the following:
 - o Getting out of a seat while the vehicle is in motion, or while the vehicle is stopped while the engine is running in anticipation of moving;
 - o Exiting a vehicle while it is parked or stopped to pick up or drop off a

Under this Bill, the consumer will have the responsibility to:

- Be familiar with the policies, procedures and protocol of the transportation provider and follow them in requesting and using services.
- Treat service providers and other consumers with respect when requesting and using service.
- Cancel services when they will not be used so that the slot may be open for others.
- Follow the directions of the vehicle operators of MCAT with respect to the operation of the vehicle, including but not limited to the seating arrangements, entering/exiting vehicle, and use of passenger lift, as well as any other request designed to protect the safety and enjoyment of the passengers.
- Be at the designated pick-up point at the designated time, barring emergencies. When these occur, communicate with the service providers, when possible, according to their communication protocol.
- Make payment for services according to stated fees and within the time frame stipulated.
- Provide feedback and evaluation regarding services received and recommendation for potential changes in service delivery.

- Passengers on scooters will be requested to transfer to a seat and wear a seat belt.
- Wheelchairs must have a seat belt.
- No smoking, drinking or eating on the vehicle.
- Do not talk to the driver while the vehicle is in operation.
- Tipping the driver is prohibited.
- Passengers are limited to two (2) bags of groceries on the vehicle. The bags are the equivalent of brown supermarket bags. The weight limit on each bag will not exceed 15 lbs.
- Update registration information as necessary in order to facilitate communication.
- **Unruly, inappropriate and disruptive behavior can result in loss of transportation.**
- Only registered and scheduled passengers will be transported. (Aides do not need to be registered but when scheduling a trip you must mention that an aide will accompany you so a seat is reserved for the aide.)
- Board the vehicle for the return trip home at the exact location you were dropped off.

Driver Responsibilities

- All service is curb-to-curb, and the driver is not permitted to assist passengers beyond the curb.

- The driver will sound the horn and wait 5 minutes before advising the dispatcher and requesting permission to go to the next pick up.
- Assistance is provided getting on and off the vehicle.
- Assistance is provided with securing seat belts.
- Assistance is provided to a passenger using a mobility device to get on and off the curb and to secure the mobility device on the vehicle.
- Drivers are required to report all problems to the dispatcher and take direction from the dispatcher on resolving problems.
- Only passengers listed on driver's worksheets are permitted to be transported.

PARATRANSIT CONSUMER BILL OF RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Under this Bill, the paratransit consumer will have the right to:

- Receive full and prompt service in compliance with Federal and State disability laws and regulations that ban discrimination on the basis of disabilities. This will include (when available) substitute drivers to meet the provider's agreed-upon service commitment.
- Be treated with courtesy, respect, and full

recognition of personal dignity and ability to handle one's own affairs.

- Be served by properly trained, competent service agents capable of performing necessary duties. This will include respecting time constraints and limitations of the consumers, as well as providing a safe and comfortable ride to destinations.
- Be accorded effective and efficient service from the transportation provider who will be accountable for quality of service, including use of the database to ensure maintenance of the agreed-upon pick-up and destination schedule.
- Have access to all policies/procedures of the transportation provider in writing or in any other alternate formats necessary prior to service.
- Receive in a timely manner all information regarding billing and fee payment.
- Be entitled to accessible transportation services that are appropriate for the traveling needs of the person with disabilities.
- Have a forum to provide to administrative decision makers feedback and evaluation regarding services received, and recommendations for potential changes regarding service delivery.