

COLTS Paratransit Service

RIDER GUIDE



Accessible Transportation for Everyone



(570) 963-6795



County of Lackawanna Transit System



Updated August 2026

WELCOME TO SHARED RIDE

COLTS provides door-to-door transportation services for eligible residents throughout our service areas. Shared Ride Service is a shared transportation program designed to help passengers travel safely and conveniently throughout the community. Because trips are coordinated with other passengers traveling in the same area, travel times may be longer than driving alone. Passengers are encouraged to allow extra time when planning appointments and activities.

COLTS' Operators will provide transportation when the passenger is present at the scheduled pick-up location and is able to safely board and exit the vehicle. COLTS' Operators are committed to providing safe and courteous transportation service. While Operators can assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicle safely, they are not able to provide personal care or medical assistance during the trip, and they may not enter any residences for any reason. If a customer needs help getting to and from the pick-up point, the customer must make the necessary arrangements. All COLTS' Shared Ride vehicles are accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

COLTS is committed to providing accessible transportation for all individuals. All COLTS' buses and vans are fully equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps, ensuring that services are available to riders with a wide range of physical abilities and mobility needs.

COLTS' TRANSPORTATION RIDE POLICIES

COLTS' Transportation Policies are designed to ensure that COLTS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, marital status, physical or mental handicap, or economic status. Any actions taken for policy violations shall be derived from evidentiary facts and deemed to be in the best interest of safety and security for public and employees.

Title VI Policy

County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS) gives public notice that it complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related statutes. Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." COLTS operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin (includes limited English proficiency) in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with COLTS.

Additional information including complaint procedures and forms can be obtained on COLTS' website www.coltsbus.com; by calling 570-346-2061; or visiting our administrative office at 800 North South Road, Scranton, PA 18504.

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Who Can Use Shared Ride Services?

Shared Ride Service is available to the general public. COLTS offers five Shared Ride Programs and four of the programs offer customers who qualify a discount. Program eligibility is based on age, disability status, medical assistance eligibility, and/or service location. The Shared Ride Programs are:

1. General Public
2. Senior Shared-Ride
3. Persons with Disabilities (PwD)
4. Medical Assistance Transportation (MATP)
5. ADA Complementary Paratransit Service (ADA)

All passengers using shared ride programs must register with COLTS before scheduling trips. Advanced reservations are required for all Shared Ride Services. Our Customer Service Representatives will assist passengers in determining which program best fits their transportation needs and eligibility.

When are Shared Ride Services Available?

Same day service is not available. All trips excluding ADA Complementary Service must be booked by 12:00 p.m. the day before and service for Monday must be reserved on Friday by 12:00 p.m. Customers can make reservations up to two weeks in advance of the trip.

URBAN SERVICE

PwD, Lottery, and MATP clients may schedule weekday appointments from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with 8:00 a.m. as the earliest appointment time and 4:00 p.m. as the latest pick-up time.

Service for large shopping groups can schedule trips between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (10:00 a.m. earliest drop off and 2:00 p.m. latest pick-up time).

RURAL SERVICE

PwD, Lottery, and MATP clients may schedule weekday appointments from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with 9:00 a.m. as the earliest appointment time and 3:00 p.m. as the latest pick-up time.

Rural Service areas:

Carbondale	Fleetville	Newton Township
Childs	Gouldsboro	Roaring Brook Township
Clifton Township	Greenfield Township	Scott Township
Covington Township	Jefferson Township	Simpson
Dalton	La Plume Township	Spring Brook Township
Elmhurst Township	Mayfield	Thornhurst Township
Factoryville	Moscow	Vandling
Fell Township	Mount Cobb	Waverly Township

ADA COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT SERVICE

ADA Complementary service is route specific and is available during the same time and day as fixed route service. For ADA Complementary Services only, reservations can be made until 4:00 p.m., on the day before they would like to travel. Please, note that calls for Monday trips must be made by prior to the Monday trip.

Where is the Shared Ride Central Office?

All programs are managed by COLTS' Administration Headquarters located at 800 North South Road, Scranton, PA 18504.

What does Shared Ride Service Cost?

Shared Ride Services are funded through a variety of federal, state, and local programs. Because of these funding sources, fares and eligibility requirements vary depending on the program being used. Some passengers may qualify for more than one program. COLTS will help identify the most appropriate and cost-effective program for each trip.

What are COLTS Shared Ride Programs?

COLTS offers five Shared Ride transportation programs:

- 1) **General Public** – this is a non-subsidized service that is available to the general public and passengers pay the full fare.
- 2) **Senior Shared Ride** - this is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation program for individuals ages 65 and older and is supported by Pennsylvania State Lottery and the Area Agency on Aging.
- 3) **Persons with Disabilities (PwD)** – this is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Program for individuals with disabilities who are ages 18 to 64. Qualified participants receive an 85% discount on all rides. Rates vary depending on what distance you are traveling.
- 4) **Medical Assistance Transportation (MATP)** - this is a Department of Human Services' program and is available to Medical Assistance consumers who primarily reside in Lackawanna County. This program provides free non-emergency transportation for treatment, medical evaluation, or to purchase prescription drugs or medical equipment that is compensated by medical assistance.
- 5) **ADA Complementary Paratransit Service** - This is a shared ride service for individuals who have a disability that prevents them from using COLTS' fixed route bus system. This service is for eligible individuals whose origins and destinations (pick-up and drop-off) are within ¾ mile of COLTS' fixed routes. The cost of a one-way shared ride fare is twice the amount of the current fixed route fares.

General Public Shared Ride Program

General Public Shared Ride Service is available to anyone who does not qualify for a subsidized transportation program. Passengers pay the full fare for each trip.

Senior Shared Ride Program

The Senior Shared Ride Program is funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), the Pennsylvania Lottery, and local sponsoring agencies. Individuals ages 65 and older may use this service for any reason, including:

- Medical appointments
- Shopping
- Banking
- School

- Employment
- Pharmacy visits
- Senior Centers
- Adult Day Care
- Social service appointments
- Visiting friends and/or family members

A Senior Shared Ride Application must be submitted and approved before making a reservation.

Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)

The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) is funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and is available to eligible Medical Assistance recipients. This program provides free non-emergency transportation for treatment, medical evaluation, pharmacies and medical equipment providers.

Depending on the destination, the needs, and the cost involved, COLTS' Shared Ride Service could provide transportation in one of the following ways:

- Fixed Route pass, which would be sent in advance of the scheduled appointment
- Shared Ride Vehicle
- Other

A MATP Application must be submitted and approved before making a reservation.

In some cases, MATP may also reimburse eligible passengers for transportation provided by family members, friends, or public transit services. To be considered, the MATP form must be fully complete, including name, address, MAID #, date of appointment, appointment time, complete name, address, and phone number of physician, physician's stamp or signature, parking (if any), tolls (if any), and total trip mileage. *A separate form is needed for each trip.*

A completed form, including the client's signature and date, is required. Faxed copies will be accepted only if they are complete and clearly legible. All forms will also need verification for each appointment the client attended. Any future mileage forms submitted without first calling Shared Ride Department of said appointment no less than 1 day prior, will not be eligible for reimbursement. Forms must be submitted no later than the 10th of the following month. Confirmations received after that date may be subject to rejection for reimbursement.

Persons with Disabilities (PwD) Shared Ride Program

Persons with Disabilities (PwD) Program is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Program for persons with disabilities who have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disability Act. This program provides discounted Shared Ride Services for persons with disabilities who are aged 18 through 64 who live and/or travel outside COLTS' fixed route system. Qualified participants receive an 85 percent discount on all rides. Rates vary depending on what distance you are traveling.

A PwD Application must be submitted and approved before making a reservation.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Complementary Paratransit Service

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service (ADA) is a Shared Ride Service for individuals who have a disability that prevents them from using COLTS' fixed route bus systems. This service is for eligible individuals whose origins and destinations (pick-up and drop-off) are within ¾ miles of COLTS' fixed routes.

ADA transportation services are not limited to specific trip purposes; passengers may use the service for a variety of needs, including medical appointments, shopping, employment, social outings, and more.

Individuals who are ADA-eligible under another transit authority's jurisdiction and are visiting the COLTS' service area may use ADA Complementary Paratransit service.

Customers interested in using this service are required to complete an ADA Complementary Paratransit Application.

APPLYING FOR ADA COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT SERVICE

Who is eligible?

Eligibility for ADA Complementary Paratransit Services is based on an individual's inability to independently use COLTS' Fixed Route service due to a disability, either consistently or under certain conditions.

Eligibility is determined in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which outlines specific criteria that transit agencies must use to assess applicants. Under ADA guidelines:

- 1) You may be eligible if a disability substantially limits your ability to navigate the Fixed Route system, including getting to or from bus stops, boarding or exiting buses, or understanding how to use the system.
- 2) Simply having a disability does not automatically qualify you for service.
- 3) Eligibility is not based on age, the inability to drive, or the inconvenience of using the bus system.
- 4) The primary consideration is your functional ability to use regular bus services independently.

The eligibility decision is based on independent functional ability to use the fixed route system, not proximity to a bus stop or place of residence. Presence of a disability by itself does not make you eligible. Your independent ability to use the bus is the basis for eligibility.

Anyone with a disability is welcome to apply for ADA Complementary Paratransit Service, even if they already participate in other shared ride programs, such as the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) or the Persons with Disabilities (PwD) program.

What is the Process?

To apply for ADA paratransit service, you must complete and submit an ADA application form. This form includes two parts:

- 1) **Part A** – To be filled out by the applicant.
- 2) **Part B** – To be completed by a licensed health care professional.

You can request an application in one of two ways:

- 1) Call COLTS at (570) 963-6795 or TDD (570) 963-6484 Monday through Friday, 8am to 4pm
- 2) Download the form from the COLTS' website at www.coltsbus.com

IMPORTANT:

Applications must be **complete** to be reviewed. Be sure to:

- 1) Answer all questions

- 2) Include all required information from your health care provider
- 3) Sign where indicated

Incomplete applications will be returned with instructions for completion.

What is the Timeline?

Once a completed application is received, COLTS will notify you of your eligibility status within 21 days. If you do not receive a written decision within that time, you are granted presumptive eligibility and may begin using COLTS service until a final decision is made.

If a decision is not reached by the 21st day, a representative from the COLTS' Shared Ride Department will contact you by phone to confirm your temporary eligibility and provide further information.

If You Are Eligible

Once your completed application and required documentation are reviewed and approved, you will receive a written confirmation of your eligibility for ADA paratransit service. There are three (3) categories of eligibility:

- 1) Unconditional – the rider needs paratransit for all trips
- 2) Conditional – the rider needs paratransit for some trips but can use fixed route for other trips
- 3) Temporary – eligibility is short-term for the length of time the rider is unable to use fixed route service

Unless you are granted lifetime or conditional eligibility, you will need to recertify every 3 to 5 years.

Once confirmed, you may begin scheduling trips through the Shared Ride Program. "Shared Ride" means you may share the vehicle with other passengers traveling in the same direction.

If you are denied eligibility, you have the right to appeal.

Can Visitors to Lackawanna County use COLTS' ADA Complementary Paratransit Services?

COLTS' ADA Complementary Paratransit Service is available to visitors with disabilities who need transportation while in Lackawanna County. COLTS accepts eligibility documentation from other public transit agencies that certify ADA Complementary Paratransit eligibility.

Visitors who have not been certified by another public entity, but who have an apparent disability or can provide documentation of a disability, may receive ADA Complementary Paratransit Services for up to 21 days within any 365-day period, beginning on the first day the service is used.

Visitors without documentation may be asked to provide proof that they are not residents of Lackawanna County if the disability is not readily apparent.

Visitors who require more than 21 days of service within a 365-day period must formally apply for ADA Complementary Paratransit Service eligibility. Applications are available online at www.coltsbus.com or by calling COLTS at (570) 963-6795.

Are Personal Care Attendants and Companions allowed to travel with an eligible ADA Complementary Paratransit Services rider?

One (1) Personal Care Attendants (PCA) are allowed to ride free when travelling with the eligible passenger. There are no restrictions on who may serve as a PCA as long as they are over the age of six and are able to perform the necessary assistance.

A companion, a person whose presence is desired, but not required by the passenger to complete the trip may ride at the same fare (twice the regular fixed route fare).

COLTS must be notified in advance that a Personal Care Attendant and/or Companion will be riding with an ADA-eligible rider. Advance notification is at time of scheduling or no later than 4:00 P.M. the day before the scheduled trip.

If You Are Ineligible

If your application is denied, you have the right to appeal the decision. The appeal process is intended to give applicants who have been denied eligibility, or who have been deemed conditionally eligible, the opportunity to have their case heard by a panel independent of the transit authority or initial decision maker.

COLTS will determine eligibility within 21 days of a completed application. If the application is not processed within 21 days, applicant can use ADA service beginning on the 22nd day until such time that a written determination is issued.

1) Filing an Appeal

- Appeals must be in writing and submitted within 60 days of the date on your eligibility determination letter.
- You may submit additional written information to support your request.
- During the appeal, the applicant's eligibility status remains unchanged from the original COLTS determination.
- You also have the right to appear in person before the Appeals Committee and present additional information. You may bring someone with you to assist or speak on your behalf.
- If you need support, such as an interpreter, please make the request in the appeal letter.

2) What to Expect

- Appeals are reviewed by an independent Committee.
- The Appeals Committee will review your full application and supporting documentation, as authorized by your signed Release of Information.
- The Committee will make a recommendation based on ADA eligibility criteria and will issue a preliminary decision within 20 days of receiving your completed appeal form.

3) In-Person Hearings

If you disagree with the preliminary decision, you will be offered the chance to appear at an in-person hearing.

- Transportation to the hearing will be provided at no cost, upon request.

4) Final Decision

- The preliminary decision becomes final 10 days after the preliminary decision date unless the applicant disagrees and moves forward with an in-person hearing.

- The final decision of in-person hearings will receive a written notice within 10 days of the hearing. The letter will include a clear explanation of the decision.
- If the appeal process is not completed within 30 days, you will be granted temporary eligibility to use the service until a final decision is made.

Applicants may reapply for service at any time if there is a change in their functional mobility.

Appeals should be submitted to: COLTS' Shared Ride Department, 800 North South Road, Scranton, PA 18504.

What is the Cost to use Shared Ride Services?

General Public Service

Individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria for one of COLTS' Shared Ride Programs may still use the service, but will be required to pay the full fare of \$30.00 per trip (subject to change).

Senior on the Lottery Program

Seniors 65 years of age and older qualify for the PA Shared Ride/ Lottery Program at no charge.

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service

Eligible ADA Complementary Paratransit Services Riders and companions pay twice the fixed route fare for the on-way trip. There is no charge for Personal Care Attendants riding with the eligible passenger. As of October 15, 2020, fares for ADA Paratransit Service are:

- One Trip: \$3.50
- Monthly Pass: \$112.00

PwD

The Rural Transportation for Persons with Disabilities (PwD) provides a subsidy of 85 percent of the fare, and the passenger pays the remaining 15 percent. Fares are charged upon a per-mile basis.

Trip Distance (Miles)	General Public Fare	PwD Co-Pay
0 – 4.99	\$30.00	\$4.50
5 – 9.99	\$35.00	\$5.25
10 – 14.99	\$38.00	\$5.70
15 – 19.99	\$40.00	\$6.00
20+	\$50.00	\$7.50

CONTACTING COLTS SHARED RIDE DEPARTMENT

How do I Pay the Fare?

To use COLTS' shared-ride services, a rider is required to establish an account before using the service. A customer establishes an account using cash, credit card or debit card. Customers pay the exact fare for the trip.

ADA Complementary Paratransit riders have the option of purchasing a monthly unlimited ride pass. There are no paper passes or tickets. The unlimited rides are electronically linked to your account.

Following are the ways to add funds to your account or to participate in the Monthly Unlimited Ride Plan:

- **By Phone:** Call 570-963-6795
- **In Person:** Visit COLTS' Headquarters at 800 North South Road, Scranton, PA
- **By Mail:** Call 570-963-6795 to request a payment form. Mail your form and payment to COLTS. Once processed, the funds or Monthly Unlimited Ride Option will be applied directly to your account.

Accepted Payment Methods:

- Cash
- Check
- Credit or Debit Card

Important Fare Information

- Fares must be paid in advance. Operators do not accept cash or provide change.
- You must have a positive account balance before scheduling a trip.

What Information Is Needed When Making a Reservation?

When calling to schedule a trip, please be prepared to provide the following information:

- Your full name, phone number, and pickup address, including any special instructions such as apartment numbers, entrances, or landmarks
- The date of your trip and your requested pickup time
- Your appointment time, if applicable
- The destination address, including the specific entrance for public buildings (such as hospitals or shopping centers). The Reservationist will advise you which entrance to use if needed
- A phone number at your destination, whenever possible
- Whether you use a wheelchair, mobility device, or require special assistance
- Whether a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or Companion will be traveling with you

The Customer Service Representative will confirm your trip details and provide fare information. Please, make a note of the reservationist's name for your records.

How Do I Make a Reservation?

For all programs except, ADA Complementary Paratransit Services - all trips must be reserved in advance. Reservations must be made by 12:00PM on the day prior to the trip. Reservations for Mondays must be made by 12:00PM the Friday before.

Customer Service Representatives are available Monday through Friday during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Customers can make reservations up to two weeks in advance of the trip. For ADA Complementary Services, reservations can be made until 4 p.m., on the day before they would like to travel. Please, note that calls for Monday trips must be made by prior to the Monday trip.

On the day of the trip, the van will pick you up at your scheduled location and take you to your destination. The van will then return to pick you up.

Reservations for ADA Complementary Paratransit Services

There is an exception for reservation times for ADA Complementary Paratransit Services. The following reservation process applies **only** to ADA Complementary Paratransit Services. Reservations are accepted Monday through Friday and on Sunday (for trips on Monday for the following week) as well as on days the administrative offices are closed (identified below)

between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Reservations placed on Sunday or on the days administrative offices are closed for next day trips will be accepted via answering machine and will be scheduled and provided at the pick-up times requested. Reservations placed via answering machine that are not for next day trips may be subject to callbacks in the event the exact pick-up time requested is not available.

Will Someone Call Me Back if There is a Change to my Trip?

COLTS makes every effort to honor the pickup times agreed upon with the customer at the time of the initial reservation. Changes to a reservation are kept to a minimum and are noted in our System for recordkeeping purposes.

Can I Change my Reservation?

Changes to a trip can be made a day in advance by calling the Shared Ride Department at (570) 963-6795. You may not change your destination or time once you have boarded the vehicle. Operators are not permitted to accept information regarding changes or cancellations.

Can I Request a Standing Trip?

Passengers with regularly scheduled trips may request a **Standing Trip**. A standing trip is automatically scheduled on the same day and time each week and remains in place until the customer cancels it.

What is my Pickup Window?

Pickup window refers to the time a rider can expect the driver to be at the pickup location for the rider to board the vehicle. A rider will be given a specific scheduled pickup time. The rider can expect to be picked up between 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. For example, if the scheduled pickup time is 10:00 a.m., the rider can expect to be picked up between 9:45 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.

- An **on-time pickup** occurs when the vehicle arrives **no more than 15 minutes before or 15 minutes after** the scheduled pickup window.
- An **early trip** is defined as when the driver arrives more than five (5) minutes before the start of the pickup window.
- A **late trip** is defined as when the driver arrives after the end time of the established pickup window and the rider boards the vehicle.
- A **missed trip** applies to trips caused by COLTS and not the rider. A missed trip is a trip that was requested, confirmed and scheduled and the rider does not take the trip because COLTS' vehicle did not arrive at all; or the vehicle arrives after the pick-up window and the passenger chooses not to take the ride; or the vehicle arrives early (before the start of the pickup window) and leaves before the scheduled pick-up window time.
- If your vehicle has not arrived 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time, please contact the Shared Ride Customer Service Department at (570) 963-6795.

On-Time Arrivals

An **on-time arrival** is one in which the customer arrives at their destination **no more than 30 minutes before** their appointment time and **not after** the scheduled appointment time.

Customer Service Representatives will work with passengers to determine appropriate pickup times to ensure on-time arrivals. This standard does not apply to return trips. Customer Service Representatives will work with the customers to determine the appropriate time for return trips.

On-time performance standards may be adjusted at the discretion of COLTS in situations beyond the Agency's control, such as severe weather conditions.

Is there a Cancellation Policy?

All trips must be canceled through the COLTS' office at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled pickup time. Failure to cancel a trip, unless due to a medical emergency or other documented special circumstance, may result in suspension of service.

When scheduling a pickup, passengers must be present at the designated pickup address. If a COLTS' vehicle arrives on-time (during the pickup window) and the customer is not present or chooses not to travel, the trip will be recorded as a **No-Show**. Extenuating circumstances (i.e. medical emergency, family emergency, etc.) may be considered before categorizing the trip as a non-show.

What is the No-Show Policy?

A **No-Show** is defined as a scheduled trip that is not taken and not timely canceled (one (1) hour before scheduled pickup time) by the customer.

Passengers have the right to appeal or dispute No-Show determinations.

Sanctions may be imposed if a pattern or practice of No-Shows occurs. A pattern is defined as intentional, repeated, or regular behavior; not isolated or accidental incidents.

A review may occur if a customer has three (3) No-Shows within a 30-day period and No-Shows exceed 25% of scheduled trips during that time.

Progressive actions include:

- **One (1) No-Show:** Documented verbal warning
- **Two (2) No-Shows within 30 days:** Written warning and copy of the No-Show Policy
- **Three (3) No-Shows within 30 days** exceeding 25% of trips: Possible **five (5) day suspension of service**

Passenger cooperation is essential. By working together, we can reduce No-Shows and improve service reliability for everyone.

Can I Travel on Holidays?

COLTS' Fixed Route service does not operate on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

COLTS Shared Ride Service does not operate on New's Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Eve.

When are COLTS' Administrative Offices open?

COLTS Administrative Office are open 8:30 a.m. to 4:00p.m., Monday through Friday. Administrative Offices are closed for New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW BEFORE I GO?

All Shared Ride programs provide door-to-door service, in which passengers are picked up at their boarding location and dropped off at their destination.

Operators provide assistance when safely feasible, but they cannot lift, carry, or provide personal care. When passengers require more help, such as lifting heavy bags or finding an office, riders need to bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or Escort.

WHAT OPERATORS CAN DO (WITHIN SAFETY GUIDELINES)

- **Offer physical support:** Extend an arm or grasp a passenger's arm for stability when boarding, disembarking, or moving short distances.
- **Assist with seatbelts:** Help passengers secure their seatbelts if they can't do it themselves.
- **Escort to/from the vehicle:** Walk with the passenger between the vehicle and the main door of their home or destination. The vehicle must be visible to the operator at all times.
- **Provide adequate time:** Allow sufficient time for boarding and exiting the vehicle.
- **Secure mobility devices:** Properly secure wheelchairs and scooters before the vehicle moves.

WHAT OPERATORS CANNOT DO

- **Lift or carry** passengers.
- **Provide personal care** (e.g., managing bags, finding offices, filling prescriptions, assist with medications, etc.).
- **Enter a personal residence (cannot go past threshold) or other buildings.** The operator cannot lose sight of vehicle.
- **Provide courtesy calls.**

RIDER RESPONSIBILITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Bring a Personal Care Attendant or an Escort:** If you need help with personal tasks, managing belongings, or navigating inside buildings, you should bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA).
- **Meet at the curb:** If road conditions prevent the operator from reaching your door, you may need to meet the Operator at the curb.
- **Request assistance:** Don't be afraid to ask for help, but please be specific about what you need.

OPERATORS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER RESIDENCES OR OTHER BUILDINGS TO ASSIST PASSENGERS AT ANY TIME. THE OPERATOR MUST KEEP THE VEHICLE IN SIGHT AT ALL TIME.

RIDER CONDUCT AND SERVICE SAFETY

COLTS is committed to providing safe, reliable, and accessible transportation in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). COLTS reserves the right to deny transportation to any individual whose conduct, behavior, or actions present a direct threat to the health or safety of others, cause significant disruption to service, or violate established rider policies. Such determinations will be made in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and due process procedures.

SAFETY

All COLTS paratransit vehicles are equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp to assist passengers when boarding and exiting the vehicle. Vehicles are also equipped with securement systems designed to safely secure mobility devices during transport.

Passengers who use mobility devices are required to have their devices properly secured before the vehicle is in motion.

For everyone's safety, all passengers and escorts **must** wear a seat belt in COLTS' vans.

Are there Restrictions on Size and Weight of Mobility Devices?

COLTS can safely accommodate the majority of wheelchairs and scooters on its fixed route and shared ride vehicles. Wheelchairs and scooters must not exceed the manufacturer's specifications for weight, length and/or width of the lift. COLTS' restrictions on size and weight of mobility devices is based on the manufacturers' guidelines. COLTS *paratransit* vehicle lifts can safely accommodate a **combined weight of up to 800 to 1000 pounds**, including both the passenger and the mobility device. Mobility devices must not exceed **32 inches wide by 48 inches long**. Mobility devices or equipment that exceed this size or weight limitations **cannot be accommodated** on COLTS paratransit vehicles.

Wheelchairs, scooters or similar mobility devices must be secured at all times.

Riders are required to wear seat belts in COLTS' vans.

Wheelchair users are strongly encouraged but not required to back onto the wheelchair lift as described by the manufacturer.

Ambulatory riders who are unable to use the vehicle steps are permitted to use the ramp/lift to board the vehicle provided they can stand without assistance and hold onto the handrails.

Are Passengers Required to Wear Seat Belts?

All passengers are required to wear seat belts in COLTS' vans. Seat belt extensions are available.

Children who weigh forty (40) pounds or less, regardless of age, must ride in an approved child safety seat. Children between the ages of four (4) but younger than eight (8) years of age weighing more than forty (40) pounds must be properly and securely restrained in an appropriately fitting approved booster seat. The adult passenger with the child is responsible for providing the approved car seat or booster seat as well as safely securing the child in the seat according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Drivers are not permitted to move the vehicle until all passengers are properly secured. COLTS will not transport a rider who is in violation of this policy.

State law allows an exception to this policy for passengers with a written healthcare document certifying a medical condition that prohibits the use of a seat belt, shoulder harness, car seat and/or booster seat. A passenger should contact COLTS for an exception to this policy. Contact

information: Keri Savage at 570-346-2061 extension 1263 or by e-mailing COLTS at: Ksavage@coltsbus.com.

Can Children Ride COLTS?

Children are permitted to ride on COLTS paratransit vehicles but must be accompanied by an adult until age 18. Children who weigh less than 40 pounds regardless of age as well as children under the age of eight (8) must be properly secured in an approved car seat or booster seat provided by the adult traveling with the child/children. See the above section regarding seat belts for more information.

Can Someone Travel with Me?

Personal Care Attendants (PCA)/Escorts and Companions

If you require assistance from another person to complete your trip or the purpose of your trip, you may travel with **one Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or an Escort at no additional charge**. A PCA is someone who provides assistance with daily life activities that are necessary during the trip or at the destination.

You may bring someone with you as a personal care assistant or an escort at no cost to you in the following situations:

- If you are under 18, you can be escorted by a parent or other relative/guardian.
- If you cannot travel independently, or you need any assistance due to age, disability or language barrier.
- If you need assistance to get medical examinations and treatments.

Your PCA, Escort or Companion must be pre-scheduled and will be picked up and dropped off at the same locations as you.

A **Companion** is someone whose presence is desired, but not required to complete the trip. You may travel with one companion, who must also be pre-scheduled and will be charged a fare equal to yours. Additional companions may be scheduled on a space-available basis.

If a PCA, Escort or Companion will not be traveling with you, it is your responsibility to cancel that reservation in advance, so the seat may be made available to another customer.

Can I Bring Packages?

Passengers may bring up to **three (3) reasonably sized packages** on board the vehicle. Passengers and/or their caregivers are responsible for managing their own packages. Operators will assist with packages as needed and as safety permits.

Can Service Animals and Pets Ride COLTS?

Service animals are permitted on all COLTS' paratransit vehicles. A service animal is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act as an animal trained to perform tasks for an individual with a disability.

Emotional support animals are not service animals.

Small domestic pets are allowed when secured in appropriate carriers.

Can COLTS provide assistance to Riders who need Assistance Communicating (i.e. do not speak English very well, hearing and sight impaired, etc.)?

COLTS provides several options to assist with communications with individuals that do not speak English including bilingual staff and contracting with Certified Languages International. Upon request, key documents can be translated into another language.

For individuals who are hearing or sight impaired, COLTS encourages customers to utilize PA Relay Service by calling 711 or call using TTY 1-866-874-3972. Upon request, COLTS will provide documents in an alternative format.

All translation and interpretation services as well as documents in alternative formats are free of charge.

Are Riders Permitted to Travel with an Oxygen Tank or Other Life-Support Equipment?

Riders are permitted to travel with respirators, concentrators, portable oxygen, and some other life-support equipment provided transporting such equipment does not violate laws or rules related to transporting hazardous materials or substances.

Does COLTS have a Process to Consider Exception to its Policies?

COLTS' has reasonable modification policy and practices that are developed for individuals with disabilities to ensure that its transportation program avoids discrimination and is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

American With Disabilities Act (ADA) Reasonable Modifications Policy

All COLTS vehicles are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

- All COLTS' vehicles are equipped with a wheelchair lift.
- Our drivers will provide assistance than you may need for a safe and comfortable ride.
- Our drivers will secure mobility devices at a special area at the front of the bus.
- Guide dogs and service animals are allowed on COLTS vehicles.
- Passengers requesting reasonable modification should let their driver know or call COLTS at (570) 346-2061.

Reasonable Modification Process:

- When a passenger requests a Reasonable Modification to the Operator, the operator contacts Dispatch to create a record of the request. Depending on the request, the operator may be able to grant for that trip.
- Riders are encouraged to contact COLTS directly to make a request for reasonable modifications or a change to their policies and practices.
- COLTS will make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, or procedures when requested to do so by individuals with disabilities when such accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability. Requests for accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be denied if:
 - o Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the authority's service, programs, or activities;
 - o Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
 - o Granting the request would create an undue financial or administrative burden for COLTS;

- o Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use the authority's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.

Requests for modification of COLTS' policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate a person with a disability can be made by contacting COLTS by telephone: Keri Savage at 570-346-2061 extension 1263 or by e-mailing COLTS at: Ksavage@coltsbus.com. Whenever possible, please make the request in advance. For same-day requests, please contact COLTS by telephone.

COLTS will notify the customer in writing if the modification is denied and indicate the reason for the denial, an alternative modification if available and describe the process to appeal the decision. Appeals of decisions are made using COLTS' ADA protest procedures.

Where can I send my Compliments and Complaints?

Your feedback helps COLTS improve service quality. If you experience a problem, please report it promptly so it can be addressed. All complaints are reviewed on the day they are received and are typically investigated and resolved within two (2) weeks.

We also welcome compliments and positive feedback, which are shared with management to recognize outstanding performance.

Complaint and compliment forms are available at **www.coltsbus.com**, or by calling the Shared Ride Department at **(570) 963-6795**. Please, be prepared to provide details such as your name, trip date, pickup and return times, and destination.