

**2017 ADA  
Participation Group  
Forum Meeting  
Dates**



Please join us for the ADA Forum! Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

**The next ADA forum is:**

- \* **May 10, 2017**
- \* **July 12, 2017**
- \* **Sept. 13, 2017**
- \* **Nov. 8, 2017**

(Changes in schedule and/or meeting place are possible. However, notices will be posted in advance.)

**All ADA Forum Meetings are held at:**

**Greater Hartford  
Transit District**

One Union Place  
Hartford, CT 06103  
Phone: (860) 247-5329  
Fax: (860) 549-3879  
[www.hartfordtransit.org](http://www.hartfordtransit.org)



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

Did you know that if you have a question, compliment and/or concern about your ADA Paratransit trip we would like to hear from you?

**Who do I contact?** You may contact the Customer Service Department by calling (860) 724-5340 extension 9, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (For the hearing impaired, please dial Relay of Connecticut at 1-800-833-8134.) You may also contact Customer Service via email at [hartfordcustomerservice@firstgroup.com](mailto:hartfordcustomerservice@firstgroup.com), fax (860) 955-2915 or write:

Customer Service Department c/o First Transit  
249 Wawarme Avenue, Hartford, CT 06114

**How soon should I call?** Please do not delay when you wish to report an incident; contact the Customer Service Department as soon as possible.

**What information will I need to provide?** Please be certain to have the day of the week, date, and time of all incidents that you would like to report. Any additional details you can provide will be helpful.

**When will I receive a response?** Any communication with the Customer Service Department will be addressed in a timely manner.

**ADA RIDER TIP:** Passengers may cancel trips afterhours from midnight to 4:30 a.m. by calling (860) 724-5340 and selecting "0".

To obtain a copy in an accessible format please contact us at: (860) 247-5329 extension 3011



**CONTACT US AT: (860) 724-5340**

- Reserve/Cancel/Confirm ..... Select 1**
- Dispatch Department..... Select 2**
- Spanish ..... Select 5**
- General Information..... Select 6**
- ADA Application Status ..... Select 7**
- Service Updates..... Select 8**
- Customer Service ..... Select 9**



**DISABILITY RIGHTS  
ARE CIVIL RIGHTS**

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Rescuing Us**

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**THE S.T.A.R.**

*(Safe, Timely, Accessible, Reliable)*

**ADA Paratransit Newsletter**



**GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT**

**SPRING 2017**

**THE AMAZING DOGS RESCUING US**

Every year in Hartford, we humans rescue dogs. Sometimes it is firefighters rescuing a dog from Quechee Pond and sometimes it's kind hearted families taking on a rescue dog abused or abandoned by their previous owners. However, often we do not hear about the dogs rescuing us whether it is kindly helping children learn to read aloud in classrooms, or something more dangerous.

Across the world, dogs are doing amazing feats in order to help us. Some dogs are being trained to sniff out cancer, while others are entering earthquake zones to look for survivors. Here in America, there are rescue dogs like Juno who is helping a boy with a rare condition called Sanfilippo Syndrome or Glory who is a rare kind of rescue dog - one who finds lost pets. Then you have Sergeant Stubby who was adopted near Yale University by Corporal Robert Conroy and taken to World War 1 where he alerted men to incoming artillery fire and despite being injured by a grenade and mustard gas, helped capture a German spy. These are all truly amazing rescue dogs and you can read more about 5 of the best rescue dogs in America at <https://www.particularpaws.com/blogs/news/5-amazing-rescue-dogs>.

(Article by: Jenny Holt, freelance animal and nature writer)

**Pictured Clockwise:**

Glory the rescue dog, Sergeant Stubby, and Juno.



## ADA POLICY UPDATE

### Reasonable Modification Request Procedure



#### The ADA and Service Animals

Many people with disabilities use service animals to help them with daily activities so they can live as independently as possible. The Department of Transportation (DOT) definition of a service animal is "Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability". (49 CFR 37.3) Emotional support, therapy, comfort or companion animals are not considered service animals.

Service animals are allowed on all ADA Paratransit vehicles.

Please be sure to alert the Reservationist if you will be travelling with your service animal on a particular trip. Under the ADA, Paratransit drivers may ask you the following questions regarding your service animal:

- Is that a service animal?
- What tasks does the animal perform for you?

A service animal may be denied when:

- The animal is not under control of the passenger
- The passenger does not take corrective action

It is Greater Hartford Transit District's ("the District") policy to 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 on one or more of the following grounds:

- Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the District's service, programs, or activities;
- Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of the requestor or others;
- Granting the request would create an undue financial or administrative burden for the Agency; or
- Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use the District's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.

In determining whether to grant a requested modification, the District will be guided by the provisions of United States Department of Transportation at 49 CFR Appendix E to Part 37.169.

When choosing among alternatives for accommodations, the District will give priority to those methods that offer services, programs and activities to qualified individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate for the needs of the individual(s) with disabilities. In any case in which the District denies a request for an accommodation, the District will attempt to ensure that the individual with a disability receives the services or benefits provided by the District by other means that comport with this policy.

#### Procedures for Accommodating Reasonable Modification Requests

Requests for modifications of the District's policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate an individual with a disability may be made either in advance or at the time of the transportation service. The District is best able to address and accommodate a request when passengers make their requests for modifications in advance. The process for making a request is as follows:

#### **Advance Requests:**

- When making a request, the passenger should describe what is needed in order for them to use the service, and why the assistance is necessary. When requesting a reasonable modification, the term "reasonable modification" does not have to explicitly be used in order to be considered.
- Whenever feasible, a request for modification to the District's service should be made in advance before The District is expected to provide the service. The District will review their request, and will make every effort to communicate in advance whether or not the requested modification can be made.
- If the modification is not made, the District will provide the reason for the denial of the request.

## CTTRANSIT CORNER

### OTHER OPTIONS TO ADA PARATRANSIT

Paratransit rides may, at times, take longer than trips on fixed route buses. In addition, the fixed route bus fare is less than Paratransit. Consider using the CTtransit service! Remember, ADA Paratransit is designed as a "safety net" only for trips that cannot be accomplished due to the effects of a disability. Please go to [www.cttransit.com](http://www.cttransit.com) to plan your ride with CTtransit. If you would like training to learn how to use the fixed route buses, you may contact the Kennedy Center at 203-365-8522 extension 265. To view a travel training video, "Mobility, Choice, Independence", please visit our website at <http://www.hartfordtransit.org>.

#### TITLE VI: ALTERNATE LANGUAGE INFORMATION

Greater Hartford Transit District (the "District") provides information in other languages in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

**If information is needed in another language, please call: 860-247-5329 x3011**

#### **French**

Si des renseignements sont nécessaires dans une autre langue, composez le 860-247-5329, poste 3011.

#### **Serbo Croatian**

Ako su vam potrebne informacije na drugom jeziku, nazovite 860-247-5329 x3011

#### **Portuguese**

Se precisar de informações em outro idioma, ligue para 860--247--5329, ramal 3011.

#### **Italian**

Se avete bisogno di informazioni in un'altra lingua, telefonate al numero 860-247-5329 int. 3011.

#### **Polish**

Jeżeli istnieje zapotrzebowanie na te informacje w innym języku, prosimy o kontakt na numer telefonu 860-247-5329 wewn. 3011.

#### **Russian**

Если Вам необходима информация на другом языке, пожалуйста, обращайтесь по номеру телефона 860-247-5329, доб. 3011.

#### **Spanish**

Si necesita información en otro idioma, llame al 860-247-5329, extensión 3011.

#### **Chinese**

如需其他语言的信息, 请致电 860-247-5329 x3011

#### **Vietnamese**

Nếu cần thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ khác, hãy gọi 860-247-5329 x3011

#### **Korean**

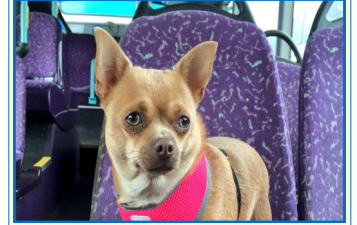
다른 언어로 기재된 정보가 필요하신 경우, 860-247-5329 x3011로 연락해 주시기 바랍니다.

#### **Hindi**

यदि जानकारी अन्य भाषा में चाहिये, 860-247-5329 x3011 संपर्क करें

#### **Arabic**

في حالة الاحتياج للمعلومات بلغة أخرى، يرجى الاتصال على رقم 860-247-5329، داخلي 3011



#### Pepe's Pointers for Spring

Señor Pepe has been using ADA Paratransit service for many years. Even so, there are still some procedures for using the bus that he needs to learn! Pepe says, "I tried to cancel my trip with my ADA driver, but the driver would not accommodate my request no matter how loudly I barked! After calling the Customer Service Department, I learned that I must never cancel an ADA trip with my driver. To cancel an ADA trip, I should call (860) 724-5340 and select 1 at least two (2) hours before my trip's pickup window."

A few other ADA driver policies to keep in mind are:

- Drivers must perform door-to-door service, but cannot enter a place of residence or go upstairs inside a building.
- Drivers can only assist passengers with up to three (3) grocery bags.
- Drivers cannot make change or accept tips when you pay the ADA bus fare.



**CT Law Updates  
Traditional  
Handicapped Symbol**

One of the new laws that took effect on January 1, 2017 is a measure that switches out the decades-old handicap symbol with a new dynamic logo.

“It’s 45 years old,” said Governor Dannel Malloy, speaking last summer at the bill-signing ceremony for House Bill 1050, which modernizes the symbol for people with disabilities. “It was developed at a different time, when our own ideas as a culture and a society were much more concentrating on that which held people back, as opposed to that which moves people forward, and so it was time.” The new disabled access signs will start showing up either in new construction, or in places where an old sign is in need of replacement. Several Connecticut businesses began displaying the new logo last year.

For full article, go to: <http://wnpr.org/post/connecticut-law-now-effect-updates-traditional-handicapped-symbol>

Examples of Reasonable Modification requests that are not reasonable requests that either modify regulations or fundamentally alter the service include but are not limited to: asking for service outside the service area, asking that a passenger’s ride be a direct ride (complementary paratransit is a shared-ride service), and/or asking a driver to act as a personal care attendant.

**Complaint Process and Contact Information:**

Complaints regarding the administration of or compliance with this policy shall be made in writing either by letter or email addressed to the Agency’s Civil Rights Officer, or by completing and returning the Title VI or Discrimination Complaint Form found at: <http://www.hartfordtransit.org/>.

All complaints will be handled in accordance with The District’s Title VI and Discrimination Complaint Process found at: <http://www.hartfordtransit.org/>. The District will make every effort to make a prompt and equitable resolution of any complaint. The Agency’s response to any Title VI complaint will be in writing and will include the Agency’s decision and the reason(s) thereof.



Each May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads our nation’s celebration of Older Americans Month (OAM). ACL designed the 2017 OAM theme, **Age Out Loud**, to give aging a new voice—one that reflects what today’s older adults have to say. Getting older doesn’t mean what it used to. For many aging Americans, it is a phase of life where interests, goals, and dreams can get a new or second start. Today, aging is about eliminating outdated perceptions and living the way that suits you best.

Take Barbara Hillary, for example. A nurse for 55 years who dreamed of travel, at age 75 Hillary became the first African American woman to set foot on the North Pole. In 2011, at age 79, she set another first when she stepped onto the South Pole. Former president George H.W. Bush celebrated his 90th birthday by skydiving. Actress Betty White, now 95 years old, became the oldest person to host Saturday Night Live in 2010.

What it means to age has changed, and OAM 2017 is a perfect opportunity to recognize and celebrate what getting older looks like today. Let’s amplify the many voices of older Americans and raise awareness of vital aging issues across the country. Join us as we speak up and out loud for Older Americans Month!

For more information, please go to: <https://acl.gov>.



- Information regarding requesting reasonable modifications is available on the District website: ([www.hartfordtransit.org](http://www.hartfordtransit.org)) as well as within the printed materials provided to the public.
- Requests for reasonable modification may be accessed online at [www.hartfordtransit.org](http://www.hartfordtransit.org). Passengers may click on the ADA Paratransit Service tab and then click **Reasonable Modification Request Form**. A form is available to print, fill out, and mail to the address on the form.
- Requests can also be made by calling **860-247-5329 extension 3011** or via email at [Pwilliams@ghtd.org](mailto:Pwilliams@ghtd.org).
- Written requests can be mailed to: Greater Hartford Transit District, (Attention: Director of ADA Paratransit), One Union Place Hartford, CT 06103.

**Same Day Requests:**

- Whenever possible, the District asks that requests for reasonable modifications be made in advance before the modification is expected to be performed. The District is aware that some reasonable modifications occur without prior warning due to the nature of using complementary paratransit. When such cases arise in which a reasonable modification is requested without prior notice on a case-by-case basis due to circumstance (i.e. because of a condition or barrier at a destination which the individual with a disability was unaware until arriving), the request can be made on the same day, at the time of, or during service.

- o A same day request for a reasonable modification can be made to the service provider by calling: 860-724-5340 extension 2.
- o The passenger must describe in what accommodation is required and why it is necessary in order to use the service.
- o The service provider will make a determination to grant or deny the request and may grant a request if such request is reasonable and meets the requirements of the District’s policies.

**Designated employee for compliance:**

- Requests for modifications will be assigned to the ADA Paratransit Director and/or designated staff for review and evaluation. Before approving a reasonable modification, the ADA Paratransit Director and/or designated staff will discuss the request with the contractor’s staff regarding the feasibility and safety of requests for reasonable modification. Requests for modifications in which a permanent or long-term condition or barrier is the basis for the request should be made in advance.
- All reasonable modification requests will be acknowledged within two (2) business days of receipt. The resolution and response to the person who submitted a request will be made within three (3) business days, and the response will explain the reasons for the resolution. In any case in which the District denies a request for a reasonable modification, the District will take to the maximum extent possible any other actions (that would not result in a direct threat or fundamental alteration) to ensure that the passenger with a disability receives the services or benefits provided by the District to use the complementary paratransit service.



**Interactive Voice Response (IVR)**

The interactive voice response (IVR) system is a technology that allows a computer to interact with humans through the use of voice and dual-tone multi-frequency signaling (DTMF) tones input via keypad. Greater Hartford Transit District’s IVR system serves to alert ADA Paratransit passengers to a next-day scheduled trip. If you have provided us with your telephone number, you will automatically receive a reminder call from the IVR confirming your next-day trip. Please let us know if there is an alternate telephone number where you would like to receive this reminder call the day before your scheduled ADA trip. In addition, if you would like to sign up to receive a same-day call to alert you that your ADA Paratransit bus is on the way, please call:

**Customer Service Dept.  
(860) 724-5340 ext. 9.**