

**2017 ADA
Participation Group
Forum Meeting
Dates**



Please join us for the ADA Participation Group 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:

- * **Sept. 13, 2017**
- * **Nov. 8, 2017**

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

**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



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, fax (860) 955-2915 or write:

**Customer Service Department c/o First Transit
148 Roberts Street, East Hartford, CT 06108**

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 of this newsletter 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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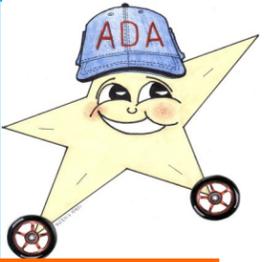
**Exciting news about
First Transit's
recent move to a
brand new facility
at 148 Roberts St.,
East Hartford!**

THE S.T.A.R.

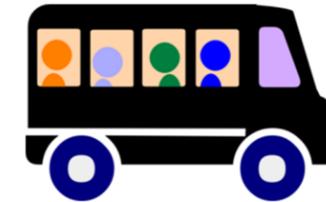
(Safe, Timely, Accessible, Reliable)

ADA Paratransit Newsletter

Summer 2017



GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT PRESENTS:



**LET'S GO
TRANSIT!**

You are invited! September 27—29, 2017

Please join us for our 2nd annual LET'S GO TRANSIT! Come and learn how convenient it is to use the fixed route buses (CTtransit). Enjoy a FREE CTtransit bus trip under the direction of a professional travel trainer from The Kennedy Center. All CTtransit buses are ramp-equipped for your convenience.

- ♦ **Wednesday, September 27: 11:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.**
One Union Place, Hartford — UConn Outpatient Pavilion snack shop
- ♦ **Thursday, September 28: 11:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**
Plainville Library — FREE visit to the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford
- ♦ **Friday, September 29: 10:00 a.m. — 2:00 p.m.**
Northend Senior Center, Hartford — Copaco to view the CTfastrak station

Helpful and professional representatives from CTtransit, The Kennedy Center, and Greater Hartford Transit District will be onsite to provide information, answer your questions, and take you on a FREE CTtransit bus trip!

For more information or to register, please call Mary Rosenbauer at (203) 365-8522 x 322. Please register by Friday, September 22, 2017.

Walk-ins welcome!

**RAFFLE PRIZES!
GIFT BAGS!
FREE BUS TRIPS!**





Caregiver Corner

Are you a caregiver for an elderly or disabled loved one? According to an AARP survey of family caregivers (1997), eight out of ten caregivers reported helping with transportation. ("Family Caregiving in the U.S.: Findings from a National Survey" 1997. National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP). If you are assisting your loved one with their ADA Paratransit trips, here are a few important tips:

- Please cancel any unneeded ADA trips by calling (860) 724-5340 x 2 at least two (2) hours before the start of the scheduled "window" time. Unwanted trips that are not cancelled will be recorded as a "no-show".
- If your loved one is uncomfortable or unable to safely travel alone, he/she may bring a personal care attendant (PCA) on their ADA trip. There is no bus fare for a PCA, and the PCA can be any person that you choose.



We had a successful run in 2017's Connecticut Statewide Transit Rodeo. Bus operators from First Transit went in strong, demonstrating their driving abilities by maneuvering through a challenging course of safety cones. Sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Transportation there was food, music, and an overall great time for everyone. Safety Manager, Brian Helm and our driver participants spent many days practicing for the competitive event.

This year Mr. Hector Diaz took home first place in the Body-on-Chassis competition! Both the District and First Transit are extremely proud and are happy to see Mr. Diaz able to compete in the Nationals in 2018. Transit Rodeo participant Luis Claudio received Third Place. First Transit took home First Place in the Team Competition (Best Team Award), meaning First Transit's team scored the most points overall in the competition! A special thanks to all participants as well as the First Transit and Greater Hartford Transit District volunteers.

We are very proud of all operators who competed in the Rodeo this year. We are also extremely humbled by the support these operators received from their fellow drivers, families, and co-workers. The amount of participation from all the other transit agencies to show who is "best of the best" was incredible. We can't wait to see what next year brings! The Rodeo was held on Sunday June 4th, 2017 in the Buckland Park & Ride lot in Manchester.



Andy Burke

Andy Burke
First Transit General Manager

Do you have a fear of taking the plunge into the world of using public transportation? Maybe you are still experiencing this uncertainty and have not yet crossed that bridge. Regardless of your comfort level, there are important skills that must be learned in order to travel on public transportation. Public transit riders need to have a minimum level of physical, cognitive and social skills to safely access public transportation. Functional skills to ride public transit include, but are not limited to:

- Being able to get to and from the transit pickup location or bus stop
- Navigating various terrain
- Boarding and exiting the bus
- Paying the fare
- Navigating through various environmental conditions like snow and ice
- Handling unexpected situations
- Traveling safely in the community

The professional field that teaches these independent travel skills to people with disabilities and older adults is called travel training. Travel trainers have the goal of independent travel for those they serve such as school systems, human service and older adult agencies, non-profit and for-profit agencies alike. In Connecticut, an organization called The Kennedy Center has been teaching people with disabilities and seniors how to properly and safely use the local fixed route bus since 1991. The Kennedy Center has successfully taught more than 3,500 people, aged 14—95, with cognitive, sensory, and physical disabilities how to use the local fixed route bus.

Travel training is available in any part of the state where there is a local fixed route bus. Individuals with disabilities and seniors who wish to become more independent should consider participating. To participate, your residence and destination should be on or near a bus route. Travel destinations are your choice! Because The Kennedy Center is funded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, there is no cost for the travel training program. Each participant, however, is required to pay the local bus fare while training is taking place.

You will have an opportunity to meet a travel trainer from The Kennedy Center at the District's LET'S GO TRANSIT! event September 27—29. Please see the front cover of this newsletter for more information about this exciting and informative event. For more information about travel training, please contact:



The Kennedy Center, Inc.
2440 Reservoir Avenue
Trumbull, CT 06111
203-365-8522 extension 265
www.thekennedycenterinc.org



Pepe's Pointers

Señor Pepe is excited about his new scooter! Because he is frequently a Paratransit passenger, he was concerned about being permitted to take his scooter on the ADA vehicle. Pepe was very pleased to learn that federal regulations require that all ADA buses allow mobility aides such as wheelchairs, and an electric scooter meets the definition of "wheelchair". Paratransit operators must transport passengers who are using wheelchairs if the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate them, and as long as transporting the wheelchair and its occupant would not be inconsistent with safety requirements.

Pepe says, "Don't forget to tell the Reservationist if you will be travelling on ADA Paratransit with a wheelchair, scooter, or other mobility device".

All ADA buses are lift-equipped for wheelchairs.