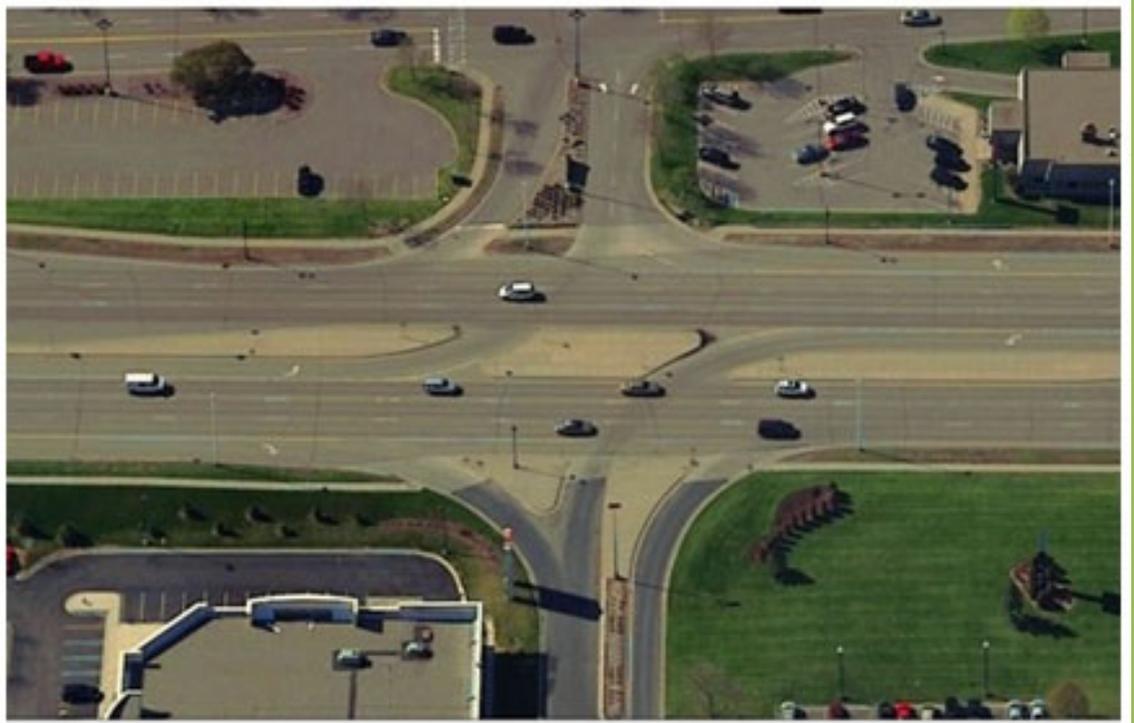


# Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan



# 2022

Orange County Transportation Services

Orange County, NC

9/6/2022



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## I. Introduction

### A. Orange County Transportation Services Background:

Orange County Transportation Services (OCTS) is a separate department of the Orange County government that operates fixed-route, demand-response, Mobility-on-Demand, and subscription services throughout OCTS, for both general public and human service transportation needs.

OCTS service area generally involves all areas of Orange County excluding the Chapel Hill Transit service area located in the southeastern portion of the county. The population of this service area is roughly 148,696 persons and involves both rural outlying portions of the county and more urbanized areas located along the I-40/I-85 and U.S. 70 corridors extending through the central part of the county. OCTS provides specialized demand-response, Mobility-on-Demand and subscription service to persons deemed eligible for such services within this area. OCTS fixed routes connects the service area to the other regional transit providers like Go Triangle and Piedmont Authority on Regional Transportation (PART).

In the spring of 2015, OCTS expanded the general public fixed-route and other services by a total of approximately 6,560 service/revenue hours per year, a 238% increase in service/revenue hours over what is currently provided. Of these additional service hours, 5,000 service hours are purely general public fixed-route service. When fixed-route service is provided, complementary paratransit service is federally mandated by the ADA. This document shall serve as the plan for complying with ADA paratransit requirements. Orange County Public Transit uses accessible small passenger cutaway buses that are high floor with wheelchair lifts.

### B. Legal authority and requirements

#### 1. Transit Requirements of ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires that public entities that operate non-commuter fixed-route transportation services also provide complementary paratransit service for individuals whose disabilities make them unable to use the fixed-route system. In addition, public entities subject to the ADA regulations must develop and administer a process for determining if individuals who request service meet the regulatory requirements for eligibility.

Essentially, the ADA requires that paratransit service be “comparable” to the fixed-route service in terms of service levels and availability. There are six (6) service criteria that are used to evaluate ADA paratransit service comparability to the fixed route. These criteria only represent the minimum service standards and can be exceeded if the local governing body so chooses. The six (6) basic criteria for determining ADA comparability to fixed-route service are as follows:

- 1) Availability in the same area served by fixed routes. Specifically, service must be made available to all origins and destinations within a width of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile on each side of each fixed route. This includes an area within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile radius at the end of each fixed route as well;

- 2) Available to any ADA-paratransit-eligible persons at any requested time on any particular day during which fixed-route vehicles are operating for the respective  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile radius in response to a request for service made the previous day;
- 3) ADA paratransit fares that are no more than twice the fare that would be charged to an individual paying full fare for a trip of similar length, at a similar time of day on the fixed-route system;
- 4) There can be no trip restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose;
- 5) Service must be made available to eligible persons on a next-day basis; and
- 6) There can be no constraints on the amount of service that is provided to any eligible person. Specifically, there can be no operating practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA-paratransit-eligible individuals.

ADA paratransit service must be provided to all individuals who are unable, because of their disability, to use the fixed-route system, some of the time or all of the time. The criteria for determining eligibility are also regulated by the ADA, and OCTS must have a documented process in place to determine if an individual qualifies for ADA service.

It provides the general framework and approach for ending discrimination for persons with disabilities. The stated national goals of the ADA are to guarantee that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, ability to live independently and be economically self-sufficient.

The Americans with Disabilities Act regulations require Orange County, as a public entity that operates a fixed route system, to provide complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities (“complementary” is that service comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system). ADA regulations require the complementary paratransit service area to be within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the fixed-route system (see 49 CFR §37.131(a)). Per 49 CFR §37.131(g), public entities may provide complementary paratransit service to ADA paratransit individuals exceeding that required by §37.131(a).

In general, the law prohibits public transit systems from denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to use public transportation services, if the individuals are capable of using the system. It also prohibits public entities from providing services that discriminate against persons with disabilities. The ADA is an opportunity to develop programs that ensures the integration of all persons into not just the transportation system of America, but all the opportunities transportation makes possible. The goal is to ensure non-discriminatory, equitable, and safe public transportation and enhancing the social and economic quality of life for people with disabilities. Specific actions must be taken by public transit agencies to avoid discrimination. For example, the law requires that:

All newly purchased or leased vehicles used in fixed-route service must accessible to persons with disabilities.

Public agencies that provide fixed-route public transportation service also must offer similar complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed-route system.

All government owned facilities must be accessible by public transportation. This ensures people with disabilities have equal access to government programs, services, activities and all that is possible to engage in civic life. Alterations to facilities must include features to make them accessible.

The regulations define minimum service characteristics that must be met for this service to be considered equivalent to the fixed route service it is intended to complement. ADA complementary paratransit standards are provided for in 49 CFR §37.123 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Orange County public transportation program complies with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **C. Meeting the Requirements of the ADA Regulations**

Under Orange County Public Transit’s Complementary Paratransit Service Plan, the level of service provided to persons determined to be ADA eligible is similar to the Orange County Public Transit fixed-route bus service. Six service criteria are included in the regulations. The following is a description of how the County’s complementary paratransit service meets or exceeds the six service criteria and eligibility standards:

#### **1. Service Area**

Orange County Public Transit service must be provided to all origins and destinations within a corridor  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile on each side of the fixed route. Service beyond this area may be provided at the County’s discretion. OCTS coordinates all service areas overlap or are contiguous.

Orange County Public Transit service exceeds this requirement. The transportation service area map is included below (Appendix A). ADA Paratransit service is provided to origins and destinations within the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor of the fixed routes. OCTS Demand Response service provides curb to curb service in a limited scope to riders who are under served or unserved within the rural Orange County area and connects them to the fixed route service and to major destinations for goods and services. This service operates 5 days a week from 8:00am to 5:00pm along with service to and within Orange County limits. Orange County Public Transit coordinates paratransit service for persons within the Chapel Hill Transit overlap area.

#### **2. Reservations:**

Next-day service must be provided for requests made the preceding day. Requests for service must be taken when administrative offices are open and during comparable normal business hours on days when administrative offices are closed if service is provided on the following day. Reservations may be made up to 30 days in advance.

Next-day service is provided on Orange County Public Transit for requests made the preceding day during regular business hours Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm. Reservations are taken seven days a

week for next-day service and can be made up to one (1) month in advance. Reservations are taken by an answering machine on days when the administrative/dispatch office is closed.

### **3. Fares:**

Fares can be no more than twice the fixed route adult fare. The fare is between \$0.00 and \$2.00 on Orange County Public Transit fixed routes depending on the route traveled. ADA paratransit eligible riders are charged \$0.00 for ADA paratransit service. A personal care attendant (PCA) is permitted to accompany an ADA-eligible rider at no charge, and a companion may ride at the same fare charged the ADA rider only if they have the same origin and destination as the ADA-eligible rider.

### **4. Service Days and Hours:**

Days and hours of operation must be at least the same as the fixed route system. Paratransit service is provided during the same time period as the Orange County Public Transit fixed route system. Monday thru Friday service operates from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM. Sunday service is not currently provided. Like the fixed route, paratransit service is offered Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Service is not provided on County observed holidays. OCTS also provides Mobility-on-Demand (MOD) services on Friday evenings 5:00 to 9:00 pm and Saturday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. MOD is scheduled to be 5 days a week before end of 2022.

### **5. Trip Purpose:**

Trips must be accepted and handled on an equal basis. There can be no restrictions on trip purposes or prioritizing by trip type. Trips are not prioritized or restricted by trip purpose for ADA riders.

### **6. Capacity Constraints:**

Service cannot be limited because of capacity constraints. No waiting lists can be maintained, and the number of trips provided to an individual cannot be restricted. Service is not limited due to capacity constraints. Orange County Public Transit does not maintain waiting lists for ADA-eligible paratransit individuals and trips are not restricted to individuals.

It is the policy of the Orange County and Orange County Public Transit to abide by all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, including but not limited to those stated below, in all activities, operations and relationships with—and accommodations of—employees, client-customers, and the public.

The ADA requires that persons with disabilities receive the same level of service for transportation as non-disabled persons. Services that are “separate but equal” are not acceptable (i.e., all individuals using wheelchairs on one bus and everyone else on another bus).

All recipients must keep federally funded equipment and facilities in good operating condition; have policies and procedures to maintain vehicles; and must maintain, in operative condition, those features of facilities, vehicles, and other capital equipment that are required to make them accessible. ADA accessibility features must be repaired promptly if they are damaged or out of order. Recipients must establish a system of regular and frequent maintenance checks of lifts and ramps sufficient to determine if they are operative. Specific transportation provisions of the ADA as amended include but are not limited to the following requirements:

Accessible Vehicle Availability: As required by the ADA, OCTS maintains a 100 percent accessible transit fleet to ensure that persons needing a mobility device have equivalent to our transportation services as ambulatory persons.

Maintenance of Accessible Features on Vehicles: As required by the ADA, the accessible features on County vehicles are maintained to a high level, so that persons needing these features receive equivalent service to persons not needing those features.

Adequate Time for Vehicle Boarding and Disembarking: As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), OCTS provides adequate time for boarding and disembarking vehicles for persons with disabilities.

Use of Portable Oxygen/Respirator Equipment: As required by the ADA, persons using the transportation service may bring a respirator, portable oxygen, and/or other life support equipment on board vehicles, as long as they do not violate the law or rules relating to the transportation of hazardous materials. All equipment must be small enough to fit into vehicles safely and without obstructing the aisle and/or block emergency exits.

Service Animals: As required by the ADA any animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with disabilities, including but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision or alerting individuals with impaired hearing, are accepted on County vehicles.

Training in Securement, Sensitivity to Passengers: As required by the ADA, County transit operators are trained to proficiency in the use of mobility device equipment and in passenger sensitivity. This training is provided by a trained trainer within three months of employment to drive for the County.

## **D. OCTS Services and Population Served**

### **1. General Service Details:**

For demand-responsive specialized transportation services, under normal circumstances, customers ride no more than one hour to reach their desired destination, and customers are delivered to their destinations on time. All specialized demand-response services are provided within a one (1)-hour window to maximize the active fleet's available resources. Pick-up times are up to one (1) hour before the scheduled appointment with the actual pick-up times being anytime within that hour. Return trips home are provided within a one (1)-hour window. Currently there are no capacity constraints placed on ADA-eligible users of the system for either the specialized services or the fixed-route services.

For fixed-route service, reservations are taken from up to 14 days in advance of the scheduled service date until the day preceding the day of service for any trip purpose and for service from any origin to destination during the same days and times of operation and within the respective ¼-mile buffer of each respective fixed-route. Reservation service is available during the normal business hours of OCTS administrative offices, as well as during the same time as OCTS normal administrative business hours on days when the offices are closed preceding a service day.

**Difference between ADA Paratransit and Other Types of Paratransit Services Provided by OCTS:**

ADA paratransit is quite different from other types of demand-response and specialized transit services provided by OCTS in that its service parameters are highly prescribed by federal regulation. ADA paratransit is required only for a narrowly defined population of individuals who are unable to use fixed-route service because of their disability, unlike OCTS Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP), which serves any elderly person 60 years of age or older or any individual with a disability. EDTAP-funded services also only provide transportation to medical appointments as opposed to trips for other purposes, which is required of federal regulations pertaining to ADA paratransit.

ADA paratransit also requires a much higher level of service than is provided under EDTAP in terms of response time, days and hours of service, and capacity constraints. For this reason, it is generally recommended that locally operated transit systems treat these programs as two (2) distinct services. While both services may be operated using the same vehicles and drivers, certification processes and community outreach should clearly differentiate between the programs to ensure that EDTAP registrants do not expect the same level of service as ADA paratransit registrants.

**2. Paratransit Services Currently Provided in the Area**

Orange County Public Transit as the public transit provider for Orange County is coordinates paratransit service with other 5310 or 5311 programs and with regional transit agencies Chapel Hill Transit, GoDurham, GoTriangle and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)

**3. Population Served**

According to recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS), Orange County’s 2020 population is estimated at 148,696.

**Orange County, North Carolina**

Ethnicity and Race		Age	
White	76.9%	Under Age 18	19.2%
Black or African American	11.8%	Age 18 - 34	23.5%
Hispanic or Latino	8.6%	Age 35 - 64	38.1%
Asian	8.1%	Age 65 and over	14.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.6%	Education	
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	High School graduates (age 25+)	93.0%
Persons of two or more races	2.6%	Bachelor's degree or higher (age 25+)	60.8%
Person's below poverty level	10.3%	Mean travel time to work (workers age 16+)	23.9 min.

#### 4. Rules of riding

- No profanity or lewd behavior is permitted.
- Eating, drinking, and smoking are not allowed in vehicles.
- Firearms and hazardous and flammable materials are not allowed on the vehicles
- Children under 40 pounds or 4 years of age or younger must have a certified car seat.
- You may not always be picked up and dropped off immediately. The operator may have other passengers to pick up or drop off along the route to your destination.

#### Passenger assistance

OCTS operators are responsible for:

- Assisting you on and off the vehicle's lift or steps.
- Securing your wheelchair or scooter.
- Fastening seatbelts (at request only).
- Contacting dispatch staff and 911 in case of emergencies.

OCTS operators are not responsible for:

- Assisting passengers past the door to the building. If you need additional help, please make sure that someone is available to assist you on your trips.
- Carrying groceries or packages—you must be able to carry your own packages or have a companion assist you (this includes child seats).
- A maximum of three (3) grocery-size bags are allowed.
- Booking and canceling trips—please call the office.

#### E. Description of Current Fixed-Route System:

OCTS operates 3 fixed routes, one circulator and two connectors in Orange County. Fixed routes operate Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Fixed-route fares range from 0.00 dollars to 2.00 dollars based on the fixed route traveled. All the fixed-route vehicles are mobility aid accessible. 100% of OCTS's fixed-route fleet is accessible, with at least 2 ADA-compliant wheelchair positions per bus. 100% of OCTS routes are accessible. Not all bus stops are accessible. OCTS accommodates passengers with disabilities by stopping at the nearest safe and accessible location.

The Hillsborough Circulator, which serves major origins and destinations in Hillsborough with hourly headways during the hours 8:00am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The other fixed route, the Orange-Chapel Hill also referred to as Hill-to-Hill or Midday, serves major origins and destinations in and between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill Monday through Friday during the hours 10:00am-11:25am and 1:00pm-2:25pm. The 10:00am-11:25am and 1:00pm-2:25pm time periods each involve the operation of one (1) wheelchair accessible vehicle (equipped with an electric wheelchair lift) that is 100% accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities traveling from Hillsborough to Chapel Hill and back. The fare for this service is \$2.00 each way for the general public. OCTS also offers the Orange-Alamance Fixed Route service, connecting residents and businesses between Hillsborough and Mebane.

**II. Public Process**

OCTS advertised a public meeting, 30-day public comment period, and public hearing to solicit input prior to implementing the OCTS Paratransit Plan update. A copy of the public notice is included in the appendix. The notices were be posted in all Orange County Public Transit service vehicles, at the public library, senior centers, County Hall, and on the Orange County website and social media pages. All comments and input received from the public are presented to the Orange County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for final approval prior to full implementation.

After the development of a draft of the plan, a 30-day public comment period was opened starting Thursday, July 21, 2022, and ending Friday, August 19, 2022 for members of the public to submit comments in response to the draft. A public meeting for the draft plan was held OCTS staff Thursday, June 30, 2022, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in Orange County North Campus, Bonnie B Davis EAC Building located at 1020 US-70 West, Hillsborough, NC 27278, at which a presentation of the draft plan was provided and public attendees were given an opportunity to ask questions and comment. A subsequent public hearing for the draft plan held on September 6, 2022, at 7:00pm at the Whitted Building located at 300 W. Tryon St, Hillsborough, NC 27278, at which time a presentation of the Updated ADA Paratransit Plan are provided and the public are given an opportunity to comment.

Notices for the 30-day public comment period, public meeting and public hearing were published in the local paper, visibly posted on all OCTS vehicles, and posted on the OCTS website. Notices for the public comment period, public meeting and public hearing were also distributed to the following agencies having a potential interest in the plan and its implementation:

- The Orange County Department of Social Services;
- The Orange County Department on Aging;
- The Orange County Department of Housing, Human Rights, and Community Development;
- Alliance of Disability Advocates; and
- Project Compassion.

The public participation notice published in the local paper, on the Orange County website and within the OCTS vehicles. No public comments were received in response to the draft plan, and no significant issues with the draft plan’s effect on ADA paratransit service in OCTS ADA paratransit service area were raised.

**III. Complimentary Paratransit Service**

**A. Description of Current and Complimentary Paratransit Services:**

OCTS currently provides the following transportation services that involve the provision of ADA-compliant paratransit service:

**1. Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance:**

Service is provided to persons 60 years of age or older and to persons of any age with a disability using EDTAP funding appropriated to Orange County by the State. These funds are supplemented by a local match and additional general County operating funds appropriated by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) annually. The service is provided to medical appointments primarily located within Orange and Durham Counties and involves a fare of \$3.00 each way for all patrons. This service is provided on a demand-responsive, point deviation basis in which advance reservations for pick-ups and drop-offs are made at least two (2) business days in advance and routes are structured to efficiently collect clients for a shared ride to medical-related destinations. The service currently involves the provision of door-to-door assistance by vehicle operators for persons who lack the independent ability to access the vehicle from the street, and the vehicles used to provide the service are 100% accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. The vehicles are equipped with electric wheelchair lifts.

**2. Medicaid Transportation:**

Through agreement with the Orange County Department of Social Services, OCTS provides door-to-door transportation to medical appointments for persons enrolled in Medicaid. These services are funded through a billing arrangement between OCTS and the Department of Social Services and are provided on a demand-responsive, point deviation basis in which advance reservations for pick-ups and drop-offs are made at least two (2) business days in advance. Pick-ups and drop-offs for Medicaid clients are intermingled with those for EDTAP clients, and routes are structured to efficiently collect clients for a shared ride to Medicaid-funded, medical-related destinations. The service currently involves the provision of door-to-door assistance by vehicle operators for persons who lack the independent ability to access the vehicle from the street, and the vehicles used to provide the service are 100% accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. The vehicles are equipped with electric wheelchair lifts.

**3. Senior Center Transportation:**

Through agreement with the Orange County Department on Aging, OCTS provides daily transportation (Monday-Friday) to two (2) Orange County senior centers. The service is funded using Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) funding appropriated to the Department on Aging and is provided at no cost to seniors electing to use the service. The service is provided on a subscription, point deviation basis in which standing reservations for pick-ups at residences and drop-offs at senior centers are maintained by patrons. Routes are structured to efficiently collect clients for a shared ride to the senior centers. The service currently involves the provision of door-to-door assistance by vehicle operators for persons who lack the independent ability to access the vehicle from the street. The vehicles used to provide the service are 100% accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. The vehicles are equipped with electric wheelchair lifts.

**4. Orange County North Campus**

Orange County recently completed construction of its North Campus facility. This facility is the new home for the County's Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation (DEAPR) and the Detention Center. OCTS recently implemented a new transit bus stop at this facility as part of the Orange-Chapel Hill fixed Route service.

**5. General Public Demand-Response Transportation:**

General public demand-responsive, point deviation service is provided to persons throughout Orange County who request pick-ups outside the Chapel Hill Transit service area. These services are funded using Rural Operating Assistance (ROAP) funding appropriated to Orange County by the State and supplemented by user fares and the County's general operating fund. The service is provided for any trip purpose and involves a \$12.75 fare each way. Pick-ups and drop-offs for users are intermingled with those for users of other specialized services throughout the county, and routes are structured to efficiently collect users for a shared ride, in many cases with users of other services, to any destination within the County. Advance reservations for the service are required to be made two (2) business days in advance. The service currently involves the provision of door-to-door assistance by vehicle operators for persons who lack the independent ability to access the vehicle from the street, and the vehicles used to provide the service are 100% accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. The vehicles are equipped with electric wheelchair lifts.

**6. Fixed-Route Transportation:**

ADA paratransit service for OCTS fixed routes is provided through a combination of separate ADA dial-a-ride complementary service and deviation of regular fixed-route vehicles for ADA-eligible scheduled pick-ups and drop-offs within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of the fixed-route corridors served depending on which method can most efficiently and effectively be dispatched to serve the requested trip without compromising the rights of the ADA-eligible user and the timing and service integrity associated with fixed-route service. The  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile buffer surrounding OPT's existing fixed-route bus service corridors within which OPT is responsible for providing ADA paratransit service is depicted in Exhibit 4.

While OPT is still responsible for providing ADA paratransit service within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of its fixed-route bus service corridor that overlaps Chapel Hill Transit's  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile bus service corridors during the same days and hours the fixed-route service is provided, OPT does not typically receive requests to provide the service because Chapel Hill Transit provides the same service at no charge to the user. There is no fare for ADA-eligible users to take advantage of this service within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of the Hillsborough Circulator route, and the fare is \$4.00 each way to take advantage of the service within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of the Hillsborough to Chapel Hill Shuttle ("Route 420 Middy"), which is twice the full fare for the general public for using the fixed-route portion of the service. Both the fixed-route vehicles that are dispatched to deviate for scheduled pick-ups and drop-offs and vehicles used to provide separate complementary service are 100% accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities and are equipped with electric wheelchair lifts.

With the addition of the fixed-route service, complementary paratransit service is federally mandated by the ADA. For the additional deviated fixed routes, curb-to-curb service is provided for the general public, non-ADA-eligible patrons as well as ADA-eligible registrants for those requesting a deviation. The fare for a requested deviation for both are twice the general public fare as for those persons accessing the deviated fixed-route service at the fixed stop locations.

The table below summarizes these services and the proposed ADA service type associated with each. Appendix B depicts the locations of these service corridors and the  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile buffer surrounding the corridors within which OCTS is responsible for providing ADA paratransit service. It also depicts the areas

of ADA paratransit service responsibility by timeframe based on the service times indicated for each route.

Service/Route	Service Days	Service Times	ADA Service Type	Fare
Orange-Alamance Connector	Monday-Friday	10:00 am – 3:00 pm	Combination of separate dial-a-ride service and fixed-route deviation	\$2 general public and ADA
Orange-Chapel Hill Connector (Hill-to-Hill)	Monday-Friday	9:30 am – 4:00 pm	Combination of separate dial-a-ride service and fixed-route deviation	\$2 general public and ADA
Hillsborough Circulator	Monday-Friday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Combination of separate dial-a-ride service and fixed-route deviation	No fare for general public or ADA passengers

All OCTS ADA paratransit service are implemented and follow the same eligibility determination process.

**7. Operating and Capital Budget for Proposed ADA Paratransit Service:**

The operating budget for proposed ADA paratransit service for the next five (5) years is below and is based on the estimation of demand explained in the previous section.

Year	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
<b>Budget</b>	\$316,070	\$325,552	\$335,319	\$345,378	\$355,739

Based on the anticipated cost per year to absorb the estimated demand for ADA paratransit service and in the manner it is anticipated to be provided, no additional capital needs are foreseen as necessary. OPT vehicles used for fixed-route service that may deviate to provide service to an ADA-eligible client are ADA-accessible and equipped with lifts. OPT vehicles that may be available to provide complementary ADA service independent of fixed-route deviation that also provide other demand response services are also ADA-accessible and equipped with lifts. These vehicles are used to provide the service exerting no additional demands for capital expenses on the system than what already exists.

**B. Eligibility and Appeal**

Who is entitled to ADA Paratransit Services?

There are three (3) major categories of individuals who are required to be served based upon their functional disability interacting with conditions of the service and surrounding environment:

- Persons who are unable to board, ride, or disembark from accessible fixed-route vehicles as a result of their disability.
- Persons who could use accessible fixed-route services, but such services are being operated using vehicles that are not fully accessible.
- Persons who cannot travel to or from a bus stop because their disability prevents it.

It is important to emphasize that only those persons who are prevented from using fixed-route services because of their disability are required to be served by ADA paratransit, rather than individuals who would have difficulty using fixed-route services but could, in fact, use it. Within the ADA paratransit

requirements, there are also provisions relating to the transportation of personal care attendants, other traveling companions, and persons visiting from other areas.

### **1. Requirements of Transit System:**

As previously noted, there are three (3) major categories of individuals who are required to be served based on their functional disability upon interacting with conditions of the service and the surrounding environment. Persons who are unable to board, ride, or disembark from accessible fixed-route vehicles as a result of their disability. This includes persons with mental or visual disabilities who cannot navigate the transit system.

Persons who could use accessible fixed-route services, but such services are being operated using vehicles that are not fully accessible. This includes persons who require a lift or ramp to board a bus. Because OPT uses 100% accessible vehicles for its general public and specialized services, this category of persons is inapplicable.

Persons who cannot travel to or from a bus stop because their disability prevents it. This includes persons whose path of travel between their origin or destination and the bus stop is inaccessible, such as persons who use wheelchairs but cannot get to or from the bus stop because there is no sidewalk or the sidewalk is blocked (by lack of accessible curb cuts or a barrier that reduces the width of the sidewalk to less than three (3) feet). It also includes persons whose specific disability otherwise prevents them from traveling to or from or waiting at a bus stop, such as persons whose health would be endangered by certain weather conditions during this phase of the trip.

Orange Public Transportation's ADA paratransit service eligibility application screens for functional disability in order to control service demand and reserve assistance for eligible persons who are prevented from reaching fixed-route stops due to their disability. It is important to emphasize that only those persons who are prevented from using fixed-route services because of their disability are required to be served by ADA paratransit, rather than individuals who would have difficulty using fixed-route services but could use it.

A formal ADA eligibility determination process is part of federal ADA paratransit requirements. As such, OPT's ADA eligibility application is used to determine ADA paratransit eligibility. There are also requirements for transporting personal care attendants (PCAs), other traveling companions, persons visiting from other areas on ADA paratransit, and the eligibility determination process itself. The application requires certification from a certified and/or licensed professional as to the presence of a permanent or temporary disability preventing the applicant from reaching public transportation fixed routes. The application also collects personal care attendant (PCA) information and information explaining the eligibility determination process.

### **2. Determination of Eligibility:**

A determination of whether individuals with disabilities are certified eligible for service is made by completing the attached application and submitting it to the OCTS administrative offices. Applications are taken by phone, email, fax, or in-person by OCTS staff. Applicants are required to provide verification of their disability from a certified and/or licensed professional (doctor, psychiatrist, social worker, case

manager, etc.), and documentation as to why they are unable to access fixed-route service must be provided. A determination of eligibility is made in these cases based on the functional ability or inability of a person to access fixed-route service and not solely on their disabled status.

Applicants may be determined eligible for some trips and not others depending on circumstances, and eligibility can be temporary based on a temporary disability. ADA service may also be used as a feeder route to transport individuals to the closest public transportation route, which they can then access. Applicants are notified of their eligibility status by mail within 21 days of submitting a completed application. An eligibility decision may be full or conditional based on the day or functional ability to make trips. If applicants are not notified within the 21-day timeframe, they are presumed eligible and provided service until such time a determination is made. All applications are updated annually. Once a determination of approval is made, the registrant/passenger is added to an eligibility list and can begin scheduling trips.

### **3. Determination of Ineligibility and Appeals:**

If it is determined that a person is not eligible for ADA service, he/she is notified in writing of the reason(s) in a denial letter and are given 60 days to appeal the decision. If a request for appeal is received, OCTS must render a decision within 30 days. Services are not provided during this review process.

The administrative appeals process provides the applicant the opportunity to be heard and to present information to a third party not involved in the initial determination. The County's designated hearing/appeals officer is the OCTS Transportation Administrator, who is not involved in initial eligibility determinations. A date, time, and location for the meeting to discuss the applicant's appeal are sent to the applicant by mail within five (5) working days of the appeal request being received. The meeting is held and a decision rendered within the required 30 days. Should a decision not be rendered within 30 days, the applicant is provided ADA service after the 30-day period until such time a decision is reached. The applicant is not provided service during the 30-day appeal period.

ADA paratransit service may also be affected by a pattern of no-shows in which ADA-eligible registrants abuse the service by making reservations but not appearing to make use of the service. To avert the detrimental effects of this behavior on the effectiveness and efficiency of the service, OCTS has adopted an ADA paratransit service no-show policy.

### **4. Appeal Process**

An appeal process is established to provide an objective and unbiased process through which individuals who are denied eligibility or service can obtain a review of the denial. An individual may appeal OCTS' decision to:

- Deny paratransit service eligibility.
- Grant conditional or temporary paratransit service eligibility.
- Suspend or deny service due to a continuous pattern or practice of no shows or late cancels.
- Suspend or deny service due to willful refusal to pay the fare.
- Suspend or deny service because an individual engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct on a paratransit vehicle or toward a paratransit driver.

An appeal must be submitted within 60 days of the denial or suspension to the Orange County Transit Operations Manager by telephone at (919) 245-2008, TDD/TTY at (919) 245-2008, thru relay service, by fax at (919) 732-2137; in writing, or in person at 600 Highway 86 N, Hillsborough, NC 27278. The appellant shall identify his/her name, address, telephone number and facts supporting the appeal, including any supporting documentation. The appellant shall clearly and concisely state the grounds of the appeal.

Once an appeal has been submitted, the appeal are granted, or a hearing date shall be set to provide an opportunity for the appellant to be heard and to present information and arguments to support his or her qualifications for service. The appellant are notified in writing of the date and time of the hearing within fourteen (14) business days. The hearing are held as soon as administratively possible. If necessary, OCTS will arrange for transportation at no cost for the appellant to and from the appeal hearing within the Orange County Public Transit service area. The appellant may bring a representative, advocate, or witnesses to assist with the presentation of the appeal. However, OCTS will provide transportation for the representative, advocate, or witnesses at the regular fare rate.

The appeal are heard in an orderly and professional manner by the Orange County Public Transit Appeals Committee. The Committee is not involved in the initial certification process, nor does it have prior knowledge of why the appellant would be denied or suspended from Orange County Public Transit paratransit service. At the hearing, the appellant will have the opportunity to submit additional information, and written evidence and/or arguments to support his/her qualifications for service.

An individual may waive the in-person hearing and proceed on the basis of a written presentation.

Appellant are notified of the Committee's decision in writing within thirty (30) days of the hearing. The written determination shall state the reasons for confirming or overturning the denial. If no decision is made within thirty (30) days after completion of the appeals process, there are a presumption of eligibility or termination of suspension unless and until a contrary decision is made. The appeal files are forwarded to the Transit Manager for safekeeping and storage. The Transit Appeals Committee decision is final.

## C. Policies

### 1. Rules of Conduct Policy

It is the mission of OCTS to provide safe, reliable, convenient and efficient public transportation to the residents and visitors of Orange County, its member jurisdictions and surrounding areas. OCTS has established this Conduct Policy to promote the safety and comfort of its riders, protect its employees, facilitate the proper use of transit facilities and services, protect transit facilities and protect its vehicles and occupants.

#### I. Purpose

OCTS has established the Rules of Conduct and Exclusion Policy to outline conduct deemed inappropriate inside and outside areas of OCTS property, bus shelters, bus stops, transfer points and on buses. This policy also details the procedures for passenger exclusions and appeals.

**II. Definitions**

Facilities means all OCTS property and equipment, including, without limitation, inside and outside areas of property, bus shelters, bus stops, transfer points, signage and buses used to provide public transportation service. No individual may engage in inappropriate conduct on, at or in public transportation facilities.

Inappropriate Conduct is any conduct that is disruptive or injurious to other individuals' lawfully using OCTS facilities or services; damaging or destructive to transit facilities or services, or disruptive, harassing or threatening to transit employees. Inappropriate conduct may also constitute a violation of an ordinance or criminal law. Not being charged or convicted by law enforcement of an incident of inappropriate conduct does not bar investigation and/or exclusion under this policy.

Excluded means an individual may not enter or remain on OCTS property and equipment used to provide public transportation services.

Assault is an act or attempt, with force and violence, to do immediate physical injury to another person.

**III. Authorizations**

An OCTS operator may refuse entry onto a vehicle to any individual who violates these Rules of Conduct. An OCTS operator, Transit Operations Manager or Supervisor may provide oral or written warning and may order an individual to leave or exclude individuals from a vehicle or facility.

If an operator, manager or supervisor becomes aware that any individual is engaging in any inappropriate conduct, such operator, manager or supervisor may give that individual an oral first warning to cease engaging in the conduct immediately and/or not to engage in the conduct again. If the individual does not cease engaging in the conduct or escalates the conduct, then the operator, manager or supervisor may direct the individual to leave the vehicle or facility immediately.

If an individual fails or refuses to leave a vehicle or other facility after being directed to do so by an operator, manager or supervisor, such individual is subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing and/or disorderly conduct. Additionally, failing to leave a vehicle or facility after directed to do so may also subject an individual to the exclusion procedure.

**IV. Levels of inappropriate conduct**

Inappropriate conduct are categorized in Levels I, II and III. Level I offenses will result in exclusion from transit facilities and/or services for not less than 30 days or more than three months. Level II offenses will result in exclusion from transit facilities and/or services for not less than 90 days or more than six months. Level III offenses will result in exclusion from transit facilities and/or services for not less than 180 days or permanently based on severity. Further legal action may be taken as applicable and appropriate for Level III offenses. The levels of inappropriate conduct are as follows:

A. Level I offenses

- Refusing to vacate designated wheelchair areas and/or seating for senior citizens and people with disabilities on the bus.
- Eating or drinking on the bus. (Note: Food items in closed containers are permitted.)
- Using an audio device (e.g., portable radio, tape, CD player, TV, etc.), unless such equipment is used with earphones so that the sound is limited to that person's own listening.
- Standing in front of the yellow standee line at the front of the bus near the driver's seat or leaning on the rear doors.
- Bringing any animal on buses uncaged or caged, except service animals that assist those with disabilities.
- Bringing on board any large articles, packages, baggage, noncollapsible strollers or baby buggies that block the aisle and restrict the free movement of passengers.
- Engaging in indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, demeaning and disrespectful behavior toward OCTS employees, contractors and/or passengers.
- Engaging in unauthorized canvassing, selling, soliciting or distributing any material on board buses or at the transfer facility.
- Boarding unattended minors: children 5 years of age and under must be closely accompanied at all times by an older responsible individual.
- Roller-skating, roller-blading or skateboarding on buses or at the transfer facility.
- Hanging or swinging from stanchions or other bus equipment with feet off the floor.
- Hanging out, reaching out or putting anything out of bus windows.
- Willfully refusing to pay a fare or to show appropriate identification or fare media to the bus operator.
- Misusing fare media, including counterfeit or stolen fare media.
- Obstructing or interfering with the bus operator's safe operation of the bus.
- Participating in otherwise disorderly or inappropriate conduct that is inconsistent with the orderly and comfortable use of buses for their intended purpose. This includes putting your feet on the seat or leaving trash behind; not wearing a shirt and shoes; and exposing other passengers to bodily fluids of any kind or odors that may present serious health or safety risks.

#### B. Level II offenses

- Smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar or cigarette on the bus or inside the transfer facility (this includes electronic cigars or cigarettes).
- Fighting
- Threatening OCTS passengers or employees, including following or stalking passengers or employees.
- Obstructing or interfering with bus operator's safe operation of the vehicle.
- Drinking alcoholic beverages or possessing open containers of alcoholic beverages.

#### C. Level III offenses

- Bringing any items of a dangerous nature on board buses including weapons (pistols, rifles, knives or swords); flammable liquids; dangerous, toxic or poisonous substances; vessels containing caustic materials, chemicals, acids or alkalis; sheet glass and sharp objects.

- Stealing or willfully damaging, defacing or destroying OCTS property.
- Lighting an incendiary device on the bus (e.g., match, lighter, torch).
- Engaging in indecent exposure or any form of onanism.
- Filing fraudulent claims about an injury sustained on a OCTS vehicle or at the transfer station.
- Entering or remaining on OCTS buses after having been notified by an authorized individual not to do so, or boarding or remaining on OCTS buses during the period when an individual has been banned from the premises.
- Spitting or expectorating on or at bus operators, employees, or passengers.
- Assaulting or threatening to assault a bus operator, employee or passenger.
- Possessing, transporting or distributing illegal or controlled substances.
- Failing to comply with conditional ridership privileges agreed with OCTS.

#### **V. Transit exclusion procedure**

In the event that it is determined that an individual should be excluded from OCTS facilities and/or services, the process is as follows:

- Authorized OCTS personnel will issue a written exclusion letter indicating the reasons for the exclusion, the duration of the exclusion and the facilities and/or services to which the exclusion order applies. If continued use of transit facilities and/or services is made subject to safety conditions or restrictions (e.g., presence of a parent or guardian in the case of a juvenile; accompaniment by a personal care attendant or aide), a conditional exclusion letter may be issued specifying that the individual are subject to exclusion unless the imposed restrictions are followed.
- The letter shall also advise the individual of his/her right to appeal the decision and include a copy of the appeal procedure.
- If an appeal is not filed by the excluded party within 10 days from the commencement of the exclusion to the OCTS Transit Operations Manager or Supervisor, then the right to appeal is considered waived.

#### **VI. Appeal procedure**

- If the excluded person/s appeals the exclusion, he/she must submit an appeal in writing to the safety and security manager to rescind or alter the terms of the exclusion. Appeals can be mailed to OCTS Administration Building, 600 NC-86, Hillsborough, NC 27278. The appeal shall contain a) a copy of the exclusion letter and b) a statement of the reason why the exclusion is improper or should be altered.
- The Transit Operations Manager or Supervisor shall review the written appeal and may reconsider or modify the decision to exclude an individual, following investigation of the matter, and shall specify in writing within fourteen (14) business days of receipt of the appeal the reasons for rescission or modification, if applicable, to the appellant.
- Should the excluded person wish to appeal the decision of the Transit Operations Manager or Supervisor, he/she may forward the written appeal to the director of Transportation Services.

- For those requesting a hearing in person before the director of Transportation Services, the Transit Operations Manager or Supervisor will schedule a hearing within 10 days following receipt of the appeal to the director of Transportation Director.
- The hearing shall be conducted as follows: a) presentation of documents and testimony supporting the exclusion, and b) presentation of documents and testimony opposing the exclusion. The Transportation Services Director or designee may question those providing testimony and may record the proceedings.
- The decision of the director of Transportation Services are in writing and shall be final.
- VII. Notice

OCTS will mail a copy of the entire appeal policy to persons issued exclusion letters who provide a mailing address. A copy of this policy is also available for review at OCTS Administration Building, 600 NC-86, Hillsborough, NC 27278.

## **2. Visitors to the Transit System:**

ADA transportation service is provided to eligible visitors. Visitors are presumed eligible for service after providing documentation of their ADA paratransit eligibility in the jurisdiction within which they reside. If a visitor is unable to provide this documentation, documentation of the applicant's place of residence is required as well as documentation of his/her disability if the disability is not readily apparent. These persons are additionally required to sign a certification that they are unable to use fixed-route transit.

ADA paratransit is provided to eligible visitors for no more than 21 days during a rolling 365-day period. After 21 days of service within this timeframe, applicants/registrants are required to complete OPT's full eligibility process, which involves completing an application and providing professional documentation of ADA transportation eligibility.

## **3. Personal Care Attendant/Caregiver/Companion Policy**

An ADA-eligible person may have one Personal Care Attendant (PCA), caregiver or companion to accompany the riders on eligible trips at no charge. OCTS requires that applicants state the need for a PCA during the eligibility application process. A PCA/Caregiver is not considered to be a companion or guest. The need for a PCA must be noted during the application process. PCAs are not charged a fare for accompanying an eligible registrant. In addition to a PCA, registrants may have one traveling companion accompany them who pay the price paid by the ADA registrant. Additional traveling companions are allowed on a space-available basis only and are subject to the ADA fare. Traveling companions and PCAs must have the same origin and destination as the customer.

One companion/guest is allowed to accompany an ADA eligible complementary paratransit passenger on an ADA eligible paratransit trip. More than one companion are allowed on a space available basis. Companions/guests are required to pay the applicable paratransit fare.

## **4. Door to Door Assistance Policy**

It is the policy of Orange County Public Transit to provide complementary paratransit services within the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile service area boundary of OCTS' non-commuter bus routes. Transportation service is provided by ADA accessible buses or vans.

Drivers are trained to provide minimal assistance only. Drivers provide assistance to passengers entering and exiting the vehicle which includes securing the passenger in a seat or wheelchair restraints and handling a limited amount of light weight packages into and out of the vehicle. When requested, drivers also assist passengers from the door of their origin to the vehicle and from the vehicle to the door of their destination. Drivers are not expected to assist passengers into their homes or other destinations. Drivers are not considered personal care attendants, nor are they trained to provide medical assistance.

### 5. Shopping Trips

To ensure timely service, passengers are expected only to bring what they can safely carry on their own in one trip or with assistance of a personal care attendant (PCA). Passengers must keep their packages secure, and packages may not occupy another needed passenger seat or obstruct the aisle way. Passengers are welcome to bring a collapsible shopping cart on board the vehicle to assist them with their purchases.

### 6. Trip Cancellation Policy for a Scheduled Trip

Passengers are encouraged to be cooperative in reducing cancellations. Cancellations are disruptive to the overall operation and the time could have been scheduled by another passenger. There is no penalty for a cancellation as long as the Dispatch office is notified at least one (1) hour in advance of the scheduled pick-up time. Passengers are encouraged to give as much notice as possible if unable to keep the appointment. If a passenger cancels a trip less than one hour before the scheduled pick-up time, it is considered a Late Cancellation and treated the same as a No Show. All Late Cancellations are recorded in the Passenger Individual Ridership Percentage record, which is maintained in the Dispatch office.

Passengers should call the Orange County Public Transit Dispatch office at (919) 245-2008 as soon as known to cancel any trips.

Cancellations can be made by leaving a message on the answering system 24 hours a day 7 days a week, but every effort should be made to call during business hours which are Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5 PM.

### 7. No Show Policy/Procedure

OCTS requests that passengers be ready to be transported within the scheduled 30-minute pick-up window. Orange County Public Transit defines a No Show as occurring when all five of the following circumstances have occurred:

- The customer (or the customer's representative) has scheduled ADA paratransit service.
- There has been no call by the customer or his/her representative to cancel the scheduled trip two or more hours before the start of the pick-up window.
- The paratransit vehicle has arrived at the scheduled pickup point within the scheduled pick-up window time.
- The driver has waited at least five (5) minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time, but the customer has failed to board the vehicle or refuses a trip.
- The driver cannot reasonably see the customer approaching the vehicle.

- If a No Show occurs, the return trip is not automatically cancelled. Staff attempt to contact the customer to verify the need for the return trip. However, only the customer can cancel the return trip.
- If a passenger is not ready at the scheduled pick-up time or refuses a trip, the driver will continue with his/her regular schedule and the trip is considered a No Show.
- Drivers notify the Dispatch office to log the trip as a No Show in the Passenger Individual Ridership Percentage record.
- The driver marks the appointment on the Driver Manifest as a No Show.
- Designated staff conducts a monthly evaluation of the Passenger Individual Ridership Percentage record to determine ridership/cancellation percentage. A letter of warning is sent to customers that had three or more No Shows and whose ridership percentage falls below 90 percent.

Letters are sent out at the beginning of each calendar month. For visually impaired customers, a phone call can be made in addition to the letter.

### **8. Missing Trip Pattern Policy**

OCTS reserves the right to suspend service to an individual who, for reasons within his or her control, has a “pattern or practice” of missing scheduled trips. A monthly review of ridership are conducted to evaluate every passenger’s ridership percentage or ratio of rides a passenger keeps compared to number of rides a passenger cancels late or fails to show for the scheduled trip. This provision does not apply to trips that are missed for reasons that are beyond the passenger’s control, including trips that are missed due to a family emergency, sudden turn for the worse in a variable medical condition, or County error. OCTS also reserves the right to suspend service to an individual who engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct on a paratransit vehicle or toward a paratransit driver. Before suspending service, OCTS takes the following steps:

OCTS monitors the ridership percentage of every paratransit patron monthly. A notice of warning are mailed to patrons when they had three or more No Shows and whose ridership percentage has fallen below 90 percent for reasons within the individual’s control. The notice: (a) advises patrons that ridership needs to improve to at least 90 percent during the next evaluation period; (b) invites patrons to adjust their schedule if needed; and (c) notifies patrons that service may be suspended at a future date if the ridership percentage continues to fall below the acceptable threshold.

If ridership remains below the 90 percent threshold for a second consecutive month or if a notice of warning is issued three or more times in the 12-month period following the initial letter of warning, and the reasons for missed trips are within the patron’s control, OCTS issues a written notice of suspension of service.

The first suspension of service are for a period of 14 calendar days. The second suspension of service are for a period of 30 calendar days. Each subsequent suspension will add 30 calendar days to the previously issued suspension.

In the notice of suspension, OCTS describes an appeal process, which gives the individual the opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments to an individual that was not involved with the initial decision to suspend service to the individual. The appeal process is described below.

### 9. Pick Up and Return

Passengers are given an approximate time of pick up when scheduling an appointment. Orange County Public Transit is a federally subsidized, shared ride system and cannot offer exact pick up or drop off times. Drivers strive to maintain a prompt schedule to ensure that all rider reservations are honored. Passengers are asked to allow a 30-minute window of time for arrival. For example, if passengers have a pick-up scheduled for 2PM, the Driver may arrive between 1:45 PM and 2:15 PM. It is highly recommended that passengers be ready to board the vehicle when the Driver arrives. Drivers are instructed to wait at the place of pick up for five (5) minutes before departing from the pick-up location. There may be times when traffic, road conditions and/or weather conditions may delay arrival. When arranging for transportation, passengers are asked to schedule a return time, if necessary, at a pre-arranged location, or contact the Dispatch center for his/her return at the completion of an appointment.

### 10. Lift and Securement Use Policy

In accordance with ADA regulations, OCTS provides service to all individuals using mobility devices. Mobility devices that exceed ADA defined devices or County of securement areas may be transported at the driver's discretion. Service are declined if safety or vehicle integrity could be compromised.

Passengers are advised that drivers are not permitted to operate a mobility device onto the lift or ramp of the vehicle. The passenger is responsible for getting onto the vehicle with minimal driver assistance. Use of the securement system on the County's vehicles are a required condition of service. All wheelchairs and mobility devices must be secured to the passenger's satisfaction before transport. When transporting passengers using mobility devices, OCTS can suggest that passengers transfer into a van/bus seat. The passenger, in this case, has the final decision as to whether a transfer is appropriate, given the passenger's particular ability.

As the regulations require, a passenger who cannot enter the vehicle using the stairs or ramp, but who does not use a wheelchair, are allowed to enter the vehicle using the lift. OCTS does not provide wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

### 11. Visitor Policy

Visitors from another area or region have to the use of the complementary paratransit service provided by Orange County Public Transit. A visitor are asked to provide documentation stating the visitor is ADA paratransit eligible in the area in which the visitor resides. If a visitor is unable to do so, they are required to present documentation of their place of residence, and documentation of the visitor's disability, if not apparent. This service is available for a combination of 21 calendar days during a 365-day period beginning with the visitor's first use of the service. If a visitor exceeds any combination of 21 calendar days within a 365-day period, then that individual is required to submit the required application a resident would be required to submit.

### 12. Other Assistance

All material made available to applicants and passengers of the County's complementary paratransit service are provided in accessible formats upon request. For visually impaired customers, phone calls are made in addition to letters referenced in this document.

Those persons who would like to learn how to use the lift or ramp equipment on an accessible fixed route bus can practice on a vehicle that is not in regular service. Whenever possible, OCTS can make available demonstrations, attended by all interested persons, and will arrange transportation to such sites for those needing those services. OCTS staff may be able to accompany passengers on all or part of their first trip if advance arrangements are made. OCTS will also make mobility training available upon request.

OCTS permit the use of a lift or ramp for Segway or other personal transportation devices when used as a mobility device by eligible customers as long as safety or vehicle integrity is not compromised. Securement provisions do not apply.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allows paratransit passengers to travel with service animals trained to assist them. The ADA (49 CFR §37.3) defines a service animal as one that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. People with disabilities who use service animals are not be charged extra fees, isolated from other patrons, or treated less favorably than other patrons.

A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove a service animal from the premises unless: (1) the animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it (for example, a dog that barks repeatedly); or (2) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. OCTS does not provide care or food for a service animal or provide a special location for it to relieve itself. Allergies and fear of animals are not valid reasons for denying or refusing service to people with service animals.

Passengers are permitted to travel with respirators, portable oxygen, and other life support equipment. Travel with this equipment will only be denied if it violates rules concerning the transportation of hazardous materials.

### **13. Subscription Service Policy**

Passengers who use Paratransit service to make regular trips (daily, weekly, etc.) can request a standing reservation service through the Dispatch office. These reservations allow passengers to not have to call and schedule each recurring trip. OCTS takes subscription requests on a first come first serve basis. If a passenger makes a standing reservation and has two no-shows, per the OCTS no-show policy, the standing reservation are cancelled, and that passenger is not be eligible to qualify for subscription service for 30 days. Trips missed by the individual for reasons beyond his or her control (included but not limited to trips that are missed due to operator error) are not a basis for determining that a pattern or practice exists for missing appointments.

**14. Cancellations**

If you are not be using your scheduled trip, please call (919) 245-2008 to cancel as soon as possible. You must call at least one hour before your scheduled trip to avoid being counted as a “no-show.” Canceling trips that you don’t need helps other riders who might otherwise not be able to travel that day.

**15. Rider suspension**

OCTS Paratransit service suspension policy is designated to protect all riders. There are two main reasons why a rider could be suspended:

- Excessive no-shows/late cancellations
- Abusive or inappropriate behavior towards other riders or staff

The length of a suspension are handled on a case-by-case basis, depending on circumstances.

## IV. Appendix

### A. OCTS Staff

**Nishith Trivedi**

Interim Director

600 NC-86

Hillsborough, NC 27278

Phone: (919) 245-2007

[ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov](mailto:ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov)

**Benjamin Clark**

Transportation Administrator

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**Jamael Wiley**

Transportation Operation Manager

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Phone: (919) 245-2006

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**Katrina Wall**

Transportation Operation Supervisor

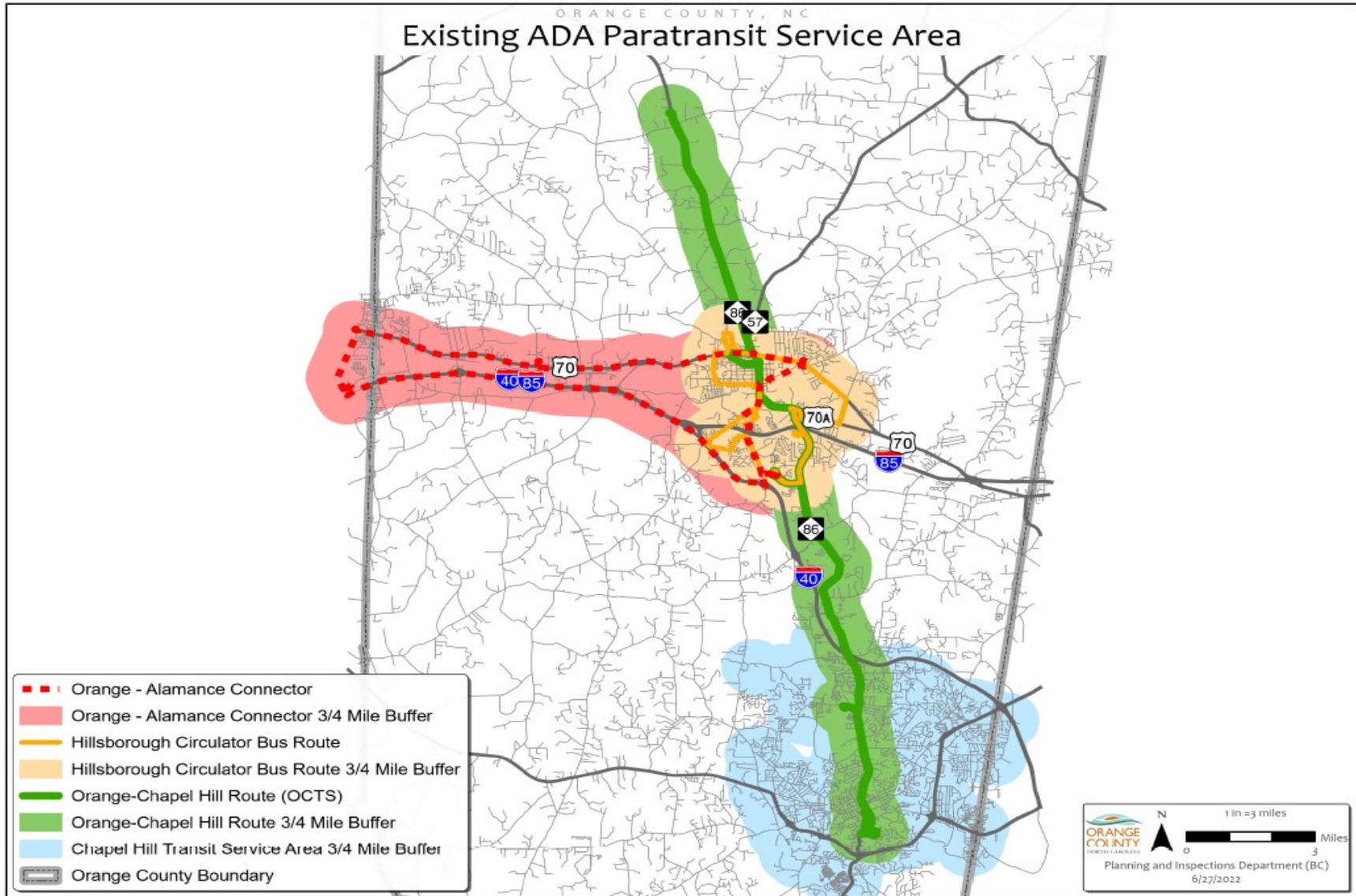
600 NC-86

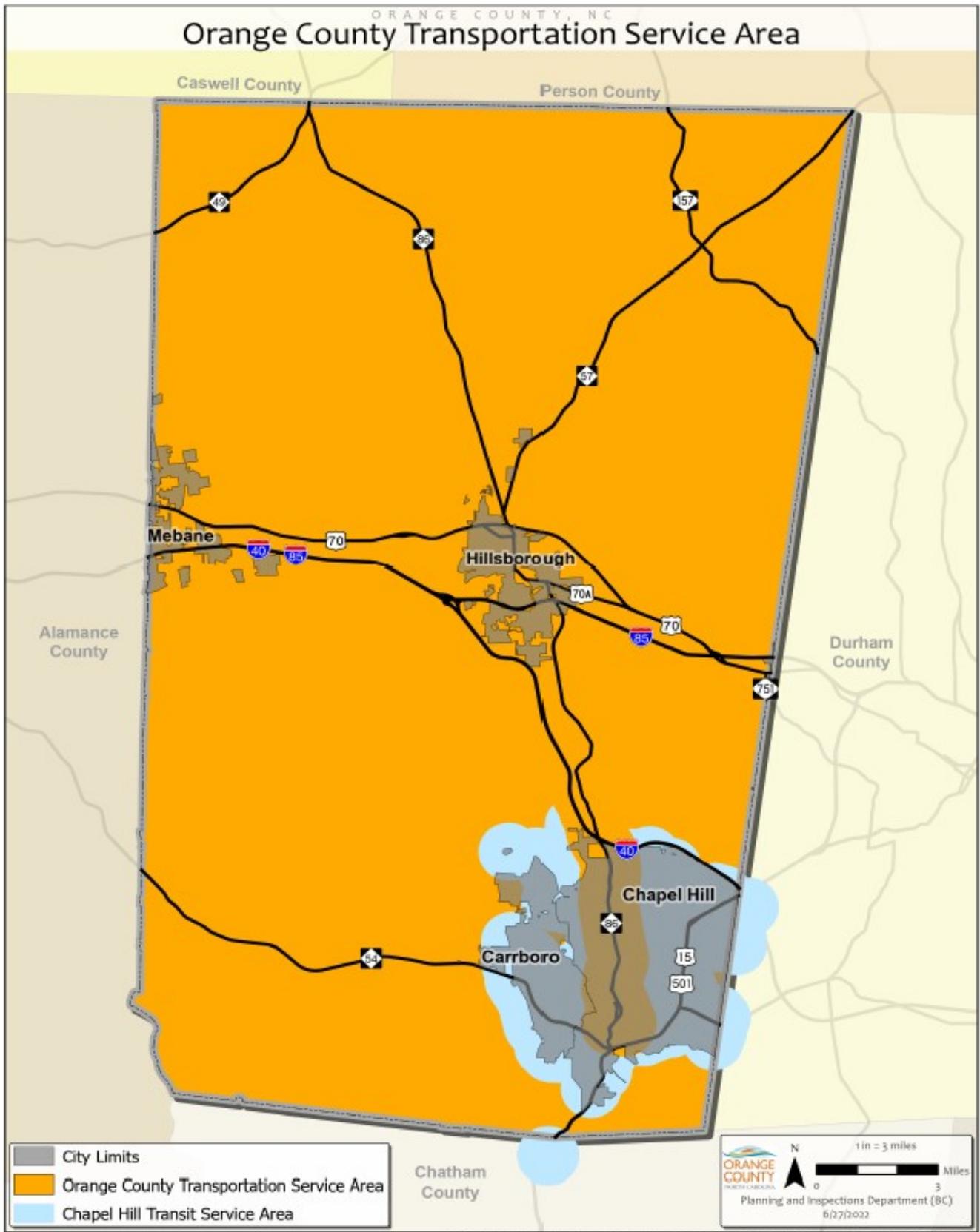
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Phone: (919) 245-2009

[kwall@orangecountync.gov](mailto:kwall@orangecountync.gov)

B. Service Routes





## C. Application & Verification

### ADA PARTRANSIT APPLICATION

The Orange County paratransit system operates in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and each program is designed to serve individuals whose disabling conditions or functional limitations prevent them from using regular, fixed-route services.

Return Completed Form to:

#### **Orange County Public Transit**

Attn: ADA Certification Review

600 NC Hwy 86 N

Hillsborough, NC 27258

919-245-2008

#### **How Do I Apply?**

If you believe you qualify, complete Part A of this application and then give both Parts A and B to a Health Care Provider who is familiar with your condition to have them complete Part B. Your signature on the application authorizes this professional to provide information to the participating paratransit system regarding your eligibility for ADA paratransit services and any needed clarification of functional limitations due to your disabling condition. The application must be properly and fully completed in order to be considered.

#### **What Happens After I Turn in my Application?**

You are contacted within 21 business days by a staff to schedule your functional assessment. For your assessment, you are provided a free trip to and from a functional assessment center, to determine your eligibility based on the following factors:

- a. Information you provided on your application
- b. Information provided by your healthcare professional
- c. A brief assessment of your actual functional abilities
- d. A review of available transportation options in the area in which you desire to travel

If you have questions or have not been contacted within 21 business days of submitting your application, call the phone number(s) listed above. If, at that time, a determination of your eligibility has not been made, you are temporarily eligible for the paratransit services until such time as your application can be reviewed.

You will receive notice of your eligibility determination by mail. If you do not agree with the eligibility determination, you have the right to appeal. Information on how to file an appeal are included with your eligibility notice. If an eligibility determination takes longer than 21 days, you may be given eligibility to use the paratransit system until a final decision about your eligibility is made. This does not apply if, through inactions on your part, we are unable to complete the processing of this application.

**ADA Complementary Paratransit Application—Part A  
Applicant Information**

*To be completed by applicant or another authorized person, PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY. Complete all of Part A and sign. Submit to a Health Professional to complete Part B.*

Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different from home address): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ TTD Number (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  Male  Female

Primary Language:  English  Spanish  Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**In case of emergency, please contact:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**ABOUT YOUR MOBILITY**

Do you use any of the following mobility aids? (Check all that apply)

- |                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cane       | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual Wheelchair    | <input type="checkbox"/> Picture Board   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Cane | <input type="checkbox"/> Powered Wheelchair   | <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet Board  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walker     | <input type="checkbox"/> Powered scooter/cart | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Oxygen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crutches   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer Board       | <input type="checkbox"/> Leg/Arm Braces  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prosthesis | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Animal       | <input type="checkbox"/> None of These   |

Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

If you use a manual, powered wheelchair, or scooter, is it more than 30 inches wide, more than 48 inches long, or does it, when in use, weigh more than 800 pounds (including person plus the mobility device)?

Yes  No

**ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY OR LIMITATIONS**

Please **check all that apply** of the following statements which best define the nature of your disability or limitation that prevents you from using fixed-route bus service. Describe your specific needs in the space provided.

I have a mobility impairment which prevents me from getting to and/or getting on a fully accessible vehicle without assistance. If checked, describe the nature of this condition and any environmental obstacles (such as inclines, curbs, and distances) which affect your ability to access public transportation. (MOB)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

I have an endurance problem which prevents me from moving the distance needed to get to the bus stop. If checked, describe the cause and nature of this condition. (END)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

I have a visual impairment that prevents me from finding my way to and from a fixed-route bus stop without assistance. If checked, describe nature of your condition and your functional level of vision. (VIS)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

I have a cognitive disability which prevents me from remembering and understanding the information needed to get myself safely to and from the bus stop. If checked, describe the origin and characteristics of your condition. (COG)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

I have a severe medical condition which limits my ability to function. If checked, describe condition

and note whether your condition is temporary or permanent and if it is episodic in nature (i.e. do you have "good days" or times when you can access transportation and "bad days" when you cannot?) (OTH)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

.....  
I am declining with functional losses due to aging. I feel I am not able to access regular bus service due to the following limitations: (OTH)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

.....  
My functional limitations do not fit into any of the above categories. I am unable to use regular bus service because: (OTH)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The condition is temporary permanent

.....  
Are you involved in any programs or training which will have an impact on your ability to use public transportation? If so, please describe.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TRANSPORTATIONS NEEDS, ENVIRONMENTAL OR INDIVIDUAL FACTORS**

Do you currently use any regular fixed-route bus services? Yes No

If yes, which routes? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you get to the bus stop by yourself? Yes No

If no, what limits you from getting there? \_\_\_\_\_

*Please check **any** of the following which are applicable to your situation.*

If I am waiting outside at a bus stop, I must have:

- a bench a shelter nothing additional

When crossing a street, I need:

- curb cuts tactile curb warnings audible signals

accessible median not more than\_\_(enter #) lanes of traffic nothing

I cannot make my way across ground which is:

paved or sidewalk grassy gravel hilly

My ability to access transportation is affected by weather which is:

warm (above\_\_\_\_degrees) cold (below\_\_\_\_degrees) rainy  
icy windy

My ability to access transportation is depended on the time of day. I cannot see in:

full daylight partial light darkness/semi-darkness

My ability to access stairs is as follows. I can manage:

only one or two steps only steps with a handrail no steps

The distance I can travel to and from bus stops by myself or with the assistance of a mobility aid is:

no more than 150 feet at least one block no more than one block  
at least five blocks at least eight blocks more than five blocks

I can wait at a bus stop without a bench:

no more than\_\_\_\_minutes at least an hour

The bus stops which I can access:

must be stops for which I have received formal travel training  
must be only in areas familiar to me

I travel:

alone both alone and with a companion  
only with an attendant or companion (this does not affect your eligibility for service)

If you travel with someone who assists you, does this person assist you in:

getting to or from bus stop getting on or off the bus helping you at your destination  
Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

I can cross a street with: 2-3 lanes 4-6 lanes I cannot cross

If you cannot cross, please explain why not \_\_\_\_\_

List your 2-3 most frequent destinations and how you currently get there:

Destination	Frequency of Travel	How you get there now


**Person completing form other than applicant (please check one):**

- I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct, based upon information given me by the applicant.
- I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct, based upon my own knowledge of the applicant's health condition or disability.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Preparer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that the purpose of the application is to determine if I am eligible for Orange County Public Transit's ADA complementary paratransit service. I certify that the information I gave in this application is true and correct and that the application are returned to me if not complete, which delays processing. I understand that falsification or misrepresentation of facts, or changes in my medical condition, may result in changes to my certification status. I further understand that additional information from my healthcare professional related to my disability or medical condition is required and are used to help determine my eligibility. I agree to notify Orange County Public Transit if I no longer need to use ADA complementary paratransit services.

**Signature of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Applicants must be 18 years of age to sign independently. Otherwise, the signature of a guardian is required.)

**Authorization for Release of Information**

I authorize the professional who has completed Part B of this application to release to Orange County Public Transit information about my disability or health condition and its effect on my ability to travel on the Orange County Public Transit (OCTS) bus service. I understand that I may revoke this authorization at any time.

I, the applicant, understand that the purpose of this application is to determine my eligibility to use the ADA complementary paratransit services. I agree to release the information requested Orange County Public Transit, and any eligibility review panel, and understand that the information contained herein are treated confidentially, unless otherwise required by law. I understand further that Orange County Public Transit reserves the right to request additional information at its discretion. I agree to notify Orange County Public Transit of any changes in the status of my disability that affects my ability to use the ADA complementary paratransit service. I also understand that this may affect my eligibility as a rider.

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Signature of Applicant or Responsible Party)**

**ADA Complementary Paratransit Application—Part B  
Professional Verification**

Dear Verifying Professional:

You are being asked by the applicant named in Part A of this application to provide information regarding his/her ability to use the public transportation services of Orange County Public Transit (OCTS). OCTS provides ADA complementary paratransit services to eligible persons with disabilities who sometimes or always cannot use regular fixed route bus services. The information you provide will allow us to evaluate the request and determine the individual's specific needs. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

**PLEASE NOTE:** All regular fixed-route and connector bus services available within the city are currently accessible to persons with disabilities who need lift-equipped vehicles, vehicles which kneel to the curb, and/or announcement of bus stops. In order to be eligible for the paratransit services, the individual must be **unable** to access these services due to conditions which prevent them from getting to or from a fixed-route bus stop, or transferring between vehicles, and/or conditions which prevent them from being able to get on, ride, or get off a lift-equipped vehicle. Individuals for whom performing these tasks is inconvenient or uncomfortable are **not eligible** for services, and you are asked to verify this information.

It is extremely important that you provide specific information regarding the individual's **functional limitations** so that an accurate eligibility determination can be made.

Please follow these steps to verify this application:

1. Read the applicant's statements provided in Part A in its entirety.
2. Fill out Part B completely using the criteria provided
3. Return completed application to applicant within 7 days of receipt (applicant is responsible for returning application to paratransit provider).
4. Be aware that you may be contacted for further information about applicant's abilities.
5. If you have questions, contact the paratransit provider at:

**Orange County Public Transit**

919-969-4900

PART B – CERTIFICATION OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

1. I have read Part A in its entirety and I agree with the information provided. Yes No

If no, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Identify the disability or health condition preventing the applicant from using HPTS fixed route buses.  
**(Please be specific but use layman’s terms)** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Specify which functional limitations are associated with this condition and be specific when asked to supply additional information.

- Mobility Impairment                      Visual Impairment: \_\_\_total \_\_\_ partial
- Hearing Impairment\_\_\_total \_\_\_ partial      Cognitive Impairment
- Compromised Endurance\_\_\_muscular\_\_\_respiratory      Other (please specify below)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

a) What is the severity of the individual’s condition?

- Mild                      Moderate                      Severe                      Profound/Chronic

b) If this individual has functional limitations due to a cognitive impairment, please indicate any of the following issues that are pertinent to this individual:

- Cannot be left alone to wait for transportation
- Displays behavior that is unsafe for self or others using public transportation
- Cannot recognize vehicles that she/he should board

c) What is the expected duration of this individual’s condition?

- Temporary – approximate duration until \_\_\_\_\_
- Long term – potential for functional improvement or periods of remission
- Permanent – no expectation of functional improvement

4. For any impairment checked above, please note specific precautions that the individual must follow in terms of:

Travel distance limitations: \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations regarding time of day to travel: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

Environmental conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please choose the statement below which best represents your opinion regarding this individual’s use of public transportation:

- This individual should be able to access public transportation successfully.
- This individual can use public transportation under certain situations as stated above.
- This individual cannot use public transportation due to multiple functional limitations.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

**FOR OCTS USE ONLY**

APPROVED

DENIED

ISSUED BY \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FILE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

## D. Public Notice

### **ORANGE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES Notice of Public Meeting, 30-Day Public Comment and Period Public Hearing For the Draft ADA Paratransit Plan**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires Orange Public Transportation Services (OCTS) provide complementary ADA-accessible paratransit service to eligible persons within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of its fixed-route service at concurrent times and dates to the routes and hours of fixed-route operation.

Presentation of the OCTS ADA Paratransit Plan and associated policies are provided at a **public meeting** held by OCTS staff Thursday, June 30, 2022, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in Orange County North Campus, Bonnie B Davis EAC Building located at 1020 US-70 West, Hillsborough, NC 27278. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the current adopted 2015 ADA Paratransit Plan.

The revised plan are available for review on the OCTS website (<http://www.co.orange.nc.us/transportation/>); in the administrative office located at 600 Highway 86 N, Hillsborough, NC, 27278 during the **30-day public comment period** starting Thursday, July 21, 2022, and ending Friday, August 19, 2022.

The Orange County Board of County Commissioners will conduct a **public hearing** on September 6, 2022, at 7:00pm at the Whitted Building located at 300 W. Tryon St, Hillsborough, NC 27278, at which time a presentation of the Updated ADA Paratransit Plan are provided and the public are given an opportunity to comment.

For further information on the plan or to submit comments, please contact Nishith Trivedi, Orange County Transportation Services Interim Director at (919)245-2007 or email at [ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov](mailto:ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov).



## E. Public Comments Received

From: [tonyblake@nc.rr.com](mailto:tonyblake@nc.rr.com) <[tonyblake@nc.rr.com](mailto:tonyblake@nc.rr.com)>  
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 9:20 AM  
To: Nishith Trivedi <[ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov](mailto:ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov)>  
Subject: [EXTERNAL MAIL!] Comments on ADA transit

Hi Nish,

I wanted to send you in writing my comments on the OC ADA transit program.

Work:

There seem to be a lot of programs out there that attempt to help the disabled who want to work get there, however there seems to be little coordination. Of course to make it worthwhile you would need to understand how many folks with a transit limiting disability there are and how many want to work. The SSA has a partner program that might be both a source of funding and a way to count these folks:

<https://choosework.ssa.gov/about/meet-your-employment-team/>

And

<https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/resources/disability-hiring.html>

Emergency services/preparedness:

- 1) Inform the disabled and their families how to make transit accommodations in the event of a disaster. An updated list and plan for evacuation is priceless. Work with OCES.
- 2) Transit employees can learn a few signs (such as “I’m here to provide transit” “I’m here to help you”) and carry an icon booklet.
- 3) items that need to travel with the person such as personal care items that are specific to the disability. Some medications will require temperature-regulated storage. Power wheelchairs and electronic mobile communication devices require battery-charging stations. This should be part the “how to make transit accommodations” above. Perhaps a checklist for the family?

Doing these simple things will greatly assist any emergency shelter intake and smooth the efficient delivery of service.

-Tony

OCTS Response:

1. OCTS offers Employment Transportation Assistance Program (EMPL), which provides transport to work or training for DSS clients transitioned off TANF or Work First within 12 months, Workforce Development Program participants, “disadvantaged public” and or public.

Eligible trip purposes: job interviews, job fairs, job readiness activities/ training, GED classes, transportation to work (scheduled by passenger), children of working parent transported to child care.

FARE COST: \$0

2. OCTS is backup to Emergency Management Services (EMS) ([link](#)). EMS has their own Eno-Haw Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan ([link](#)).

Nish

Hope you are doing well. Thank you for sending along word version of the 2022 Paratransit plan. I am at home quarantining so I had ample opportunity to read and edit. Please review my comments. I have typo edits to pages 1, 3, 7, 8, 10 and 11. Although I commented on sections referring to things that “will happen in 2015”; I am assuming that a revised version will state that the “will happen” happened.

I highlighted in yellow two sentences on page 13 that addressed a concern of ours: the “certified or licensed professional can be any of the following: doctor , psychiatrist, social worker, case manager, etc.” This would include nurse practitioners, physician assistance as well as physical therapist. This is very helpful and we are very supportive.

The ADA signature page ( on page 33) does not require a type of professional just ask for the “Type of Practice”.

I think the other point of concern is moving forward with the Interlocal Agreement.. I believe it will facilitate development of inter county para transit program. – if there is anything we can do to assist you please do not hesitate to ask

With Appreciation.

Fred

Assistant Professor  
Duke Family Medicine & Community Health  
Division of Community Health  
<https://fmch.duke.edu/division-community-health>  
DUHS Population Health Management Office (PHMO)  
<https://phmo.dukehealth.org/>

OCTS Response:

1. All “will” occur events from 2015 plan are updated to include all improvements to OCTS services.
2. Certified and licensed professionals list updated to include all certified and licensed medical professionals.
3. Staff is looking into all Inter Local Agreements in place with various agencies to determine best path forward towards consolidated agreements, this includes technology (eolane vs trapeze), fare collection (UMO or other), and other common resources and practices.

I added a couple of comments.

Angel

Ángel Romero Ruiz, MMC, CNM  
Program Coordinator, Community Partnerships  
Duke Population Health Management Office

- Comment 1: Saturday is not mentioned. Is there any service?
  - OCTS Response – MOD added to plan to demonstrate agencies weekend service.
- Comment 2: Three fixed routes are listed above, but only one is mentioned here. Which are the other two? And which are the connectors? Update: I see they are listed later, below. You may want to update this section.
  - OCTS Response – all services updated throughout plan.

**ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ORANGE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) PARATRANSIT PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President in July 1990; and

**WHEREAS**, the ADA prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, housing and transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, the ADA's intent is to ensure equal opportunity for persons with disabilities to access public accommodations, public services, telecommunications and transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, to comply with the ADA, Orange County Transportation Services is required to provide paratransit service to those persons with disabilities who are unable to use or access the fixed-route transit system; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of Transportation require public transit operators providing fixed-route service to submit complementary paratransit plans and annual updates to the Federal Transit Administration; and

**WHEREAS**, Orange County Transportation Services successfully expanded fixed-route service considerably necessitating a need to update and adopt its ADA paratransit plan with an updated service plan and service area;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Orange County Board of Commissioners that the Board approves and adopts the 2022 Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Orange County Board of Commissioners authorizes Orange County Transportation Services to submit the 2022 Orange County ADA Paratransit Plan to the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Federal Transit Administration.

Upon motion of Commissioner McKee, seconded by Commissioner Fowler, the foregoing resolution was adopted this the 6<sup>th</sup> day of September 2022.

