



# ADA Paratransit Service Policies and Procedures

ADA and Paratransit Service  
Policies and Procedures

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Please call (530) 541-7149, Option 5 or send an email to [info@tahoetransportation.org](mailto:info@tahoetransportation.org) to request alternative formats (e.g., Braille, audio recording).



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## Table of Contents

OVERVIEW .....	3
ELIGIBILITY FOR PARATRANSIT SERVICE .....	5
EVIDENCE OF ELIGIBILITY .....	5
APPLICATION FOR ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE.....	5
RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS .....	6
APPEALS PROCESS.....	7
VISITORS.....	7
SERVICE HOURS AND AREA.....	7
CHILDREN .....	11
TRIP RESERVATIONS AND CANCELLATIONS .....	11
To Schedule a Ride .....	11
On Time Performance.....	12
Plan Carefully .....	13
Cancellations.....	13
Subscription Service .....	14
CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR NO-SHOWS .....	14
CARRY-ON ITEMS.....	15
Mobility Devices.....	15
Use of Portable Oxygen.....	15
SAFETY .....	15
Wheelchair Securement .....	16
Use of Safety Belts.....	16
Boarding Belts .....	17
Boarding Direction on Lifts.....	17
Wheelchair Wheel Locks (“Brakes”).....	17
Walkers and Rollators.....	17
Caregiver Responsibility.....	17
SERVICE ANIMALS.....	17
OPERATOR ASSISTANCE POLICY.....	18
PASSENGER BEHAVIOR.....	19

CONSEQUENCES OF MISCONDUCT .....19  
LOST AND FOUND .....20  
CONTACT.....20

**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A –  
    I. TTD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES .....21  
    II. DEFINITION OF ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBLE .....25  
APPENDIX B – TTD APPEALS PROCESS.....26  
APPENDIX C – TTD COMPLAINT PROCESS.....28

## OVERVIEW

The Tahoe Transportation District's ("TTD") Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service is intended for persons who are unable to:

- Travel to or from transit stops or centers within the service area
- Independently board, ride, or exit fixed-route transit vehicles
- Otherwise independently "navigate the system," e.g., a person who cannot ride the bus independently, recognize bus stops, understand how to complete bus trips, pay the fare, etc.

The paratransit service is intended to serve as a "safety net" for individuals who are unable to use fixed route services.

"Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities [is an ADA paratransit eligible individual]" (Title 49 Subtitle A Part 37.123).

Persons with disabilities who meet TTD's eligibility criteria developed under the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and described in Appendix A, are eligible for the paratransit service. Disability alone does not establish ADA paratransit eligibility. An applicant may be required to participate in an interview and/or functional assessment, and information provided by the applicant may be shared with the individual(s) performing the functional assessment. TTD's decisions regarding eligibility will be based solely on the applicant's functional ability to access and use the fixed-route transit service. Individuals deemed eligible are considered "ADA paratransit eligible" and will be afforded all rights associated with the ADA complementary paratransit service criteria Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title 49 CFR 37.131.

Under DOT ADA regulations, 49 C.F.R. Section 37.121(a), "each public entity operating a fixed route system shall provide paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system." In general, the criteria for determining whether service is comparable includes:

- Service Area:  
TTD must provide complementary paratransit service to origins and destinations within corridors with a width of three-fourths of a mile on each side of each fixed route, excluding commuter routes. TTD's service area extends beyond this requirement, having two separate areas with different regulations, and is outlined in the Service Area and Hours section of this document.

- **Excessive Trip Length:**  
TTD paratransit is a shared ride service. Other passengers will likely be picked up and dropped off along the way during the trip. Ride times are therefore longer than driving to the destination directly. Be sure to leave enough time when scheduling trips. An ADA paratransit trip should be similar in length to the time it would take to make the same trip on fixed-route transit. When making this comparison, all elements of fixed route trips between origins and destinations are considered including:
  - Walking time to the stop from the origin address
  - Waiting time
  - In-vehicle time (for all trip segments)
  - Transfer times (if any)
  - Walking time from the final stop to the destination address
  
- **Fares:**  
The fare for paratransit service shall not exceed twice the fare charged to an individual paying full fare for a trip of similar length, at a similar time of day, on a fixed route.
  
- **No Restriction on Trip Purpose:**  
Similar to fixed routes, paratransit passengers may ride the paratransit system for any purpose. Prioritizing one type of trip (e.g., work trips) over another (e.g., shopping trips) in the scheduling and dispatching is prohibited.
  
- **Hours and Days of Service:**  
Paratransit service shall be available throughout the same hours and days as fixed route service.
  
- **Trip Denials and Missed Trips:**  
Transit agencies cannot have substantial numbers of trip denials and missed trips.
  - **Trip Denials:**  
Examples of trip denials include:
    - A passenger requests a trip which TTD cannot provide.
    - A passenger requests a trip and TTD can only offer a trip that is outside of the one hour (-60/+60) negotiating window. This results in a denial whether the passenger accepts the reservation or not.
    - A passenger requests a round-trip and TTD can only provide one leg of the trip. If the passenger does not accept the one-way trip, both portions of the trip are denials.
    - If the same situation occurs and the passenger accepts the first leg of the trip, it would only count as one denial.
  - **Missed Trips:**  
Missed trips result from trips that are requested, confirmed, and scheduled, but do not take place because:
    - The vehicle arrives and leaves before the beginning of the pick up window without picking up the passenger and without any indication from the passenger that he or she no longer wants to make the trip. A passenger is

not obligated to board until the beginning of the pick up window or from the start of the pick up window until five minutes has lapsed.

- The vehicle does not wait the required time within the pick up window, there is no contact with the passenger, and the vehicle departs without the passenger. If during the wait time the passenger indicates he or she no longer wants to take the trip, this is recorded as a no-show.
- The vehicle arrives after the end of the pick up window and departs without picking up the passenger (either because the passenger is not there or declines to take the trip because it is now late).
- The vehicle does not arrive at the pick up location.

Paratransit service is a shared ride, “origin to destination,” transportation service, as well as public transportation and should not be confused with private transportation. Door-to-door service may be provided upon request with some limitations. Operators cannot provide door-to-door service if they cannot maintain visual contact with the vehicle. Under no circumstances will TTD operators cross the threshold (i.e., doorway) of a building or residence. The vehicles used for paratransit service require an obstruction-free approach and sufficient turn-around area. Under some conditions (e.g., ice and snow), the policy of door-to-door service will not be available to passengers. Alternate pick up and drop-off locations may be established because of obstructed driveways or other safety concerns.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR PARATRANSIT SERVICE**

Persons with disabilities who meet TTD’s eligibility criteria, developed under the guidelines established by the ADA and described in Appendix A, are eligible to use the paratransit service.

### **EVIDENCE OF ELIGIBILITY**

All persons using the paratransit service must establish eligibility through an application process.

### **APPLICATION FOR ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE**

To be eligible for the paratransit service, applicants must complete an Application for Paratransit Service and be certified as paratransit eligible by TTD. That application can be obtained by:

- (1) Visiting the South Y Transit Center during business hours,
- (2) Printing an Application for Paratransit Service at:  
<http://tahoetransportation.org/transit/paratransit>, or
- (3) Contacting TTD’s Operations Support Specialist at 530-732-5102

Parts A, B, and C of the application must be completed and submitted to TTD. Parts A and B are completed by the applicant. Part C is completed by one of the following qualified medical professionals familiar with the applicant’s disability and/or condition and current functional abilities to use regular fixed-route transit service:

- Physician (MD/DO)
- Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner
- Registered Nurse

- Physical or Occupational Therapist
- Psychiatrist or Psychologist
- Rehabilitation Specialist
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Ophthalmologist or Optometrist
- Other professionals who have received express prior approval by TTD

TTD will review submitted applications within 21 calendar days of receipt. Once an application is approved, TTD assigns a category to persons with disabilities certified as meeting TTD's eligibility criteria. The eligibility category is consistent with the person's ability to use the fixed-route service. There are three categories:

Unconditional – Person is not able to use accessible fixed-route transit service under any circumstances and is eligible for all trips on the paratransit service.

Conditional – Person is not able to use accessible fixed-route transit service in specific circumstances and is eligible to use the paratransit service under limited circumstances.

Dispatchers will evaluate the person's eligibility for trip requests at the time of the reservation request. Dispatchers will inform the person if the trip is deemed eligible based on conditions listed in their certification. If the trip is found ineligible, dispatchers will inform the person about the availability of fixed-route service as a viable alternative.

Temporary Unconditional or Temporary Conditional – Person is not able to use fixed-route transit service at this time; however, the person may be able to use fixed-route transit service in the future. The person will be eligible for trips on the paratransit service either unconditionally or with conditions.

**Certification for Those with Temporary Disabilities:**

Persons can be certified on a “temporary” basis, typically for less than one (1) year. Examples of this type of certification are post-operative recovery and physical therapy to recover from injury. Should their disability continue beyond their certification period, they are required to recertify at the end of the temporary period of eligibility by completing a new Application for Paratransit Service.

**Personal Care Attendant (PCA):**

Those persons requiring assistance of a personal care attendant (PCA) will have that information noted in TTD's reservation system. PCAs must have the same origin and destination as the eligible passenger they are accompanying.

**RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

All paratransit service customers must be recertified for eligibility every three (3) years, regardless of age or medical condition. Paratransit users shall be responsible for completing a new application upon expiration. Certification and recertification requirements may change.



## APPEALS PROCESS

Applicants whose requests for certification are denied have the right to appeal pursuant to the process and procedures described in Appendix B. TTD will provide paratransit service to the individual during the appeal process.

## VISITORS

Visitors to the region unable to use the fixed-route system may use paratransit eligibility credentials from other transit agencies. If the visitor has been certified as ADA paratransit eligible by another public entity, TTD will honor the certification and the visitor may use the paratransit service for up to 21 days. It is recommended the visitor call TTD in advance to have their information added to TTD's database of persons eligible for the paratransit service.

If visitors have not been certified as ADA paratransit eligible by another public entity, but claim they meet TTD's eligibility criteria, they are entitled to presumptive eligibility and shall be allowed to use the paratransit service for 21 days. Visitors who are not certified by another transit provider and claim presumptive eligibility may be requested to provide certain documentation, such as place of residence and the nature of their disability.

The 21 days of service that is provided to visitors with disabilities are calculated as any combination of 21 days during any 365-day period, beginning with the visitor's first use of service. For example, a person may visit two days a week. Eligibility would be extended in this case over an 11-week period, within which 21 days of paratransit service would be provided.

Visitors who require more than 21 days of service within the 365-day period are required to apply for local eligibility through the certification process. Visitors with disabilities shall be provided with the same level of service as other eligible passengers and are subject to the same service policy requirements.

## SERVICE HOURS AND AREA

Paratransit service hours are the same as the local fixed route operating hours in both services outlined below (i.e., baseline paratransit service and extended paratransit service).

TTD operates both a **Baseline Paratransit Service** and an **Extended Paratransit Service**. The service differences are outlined below:

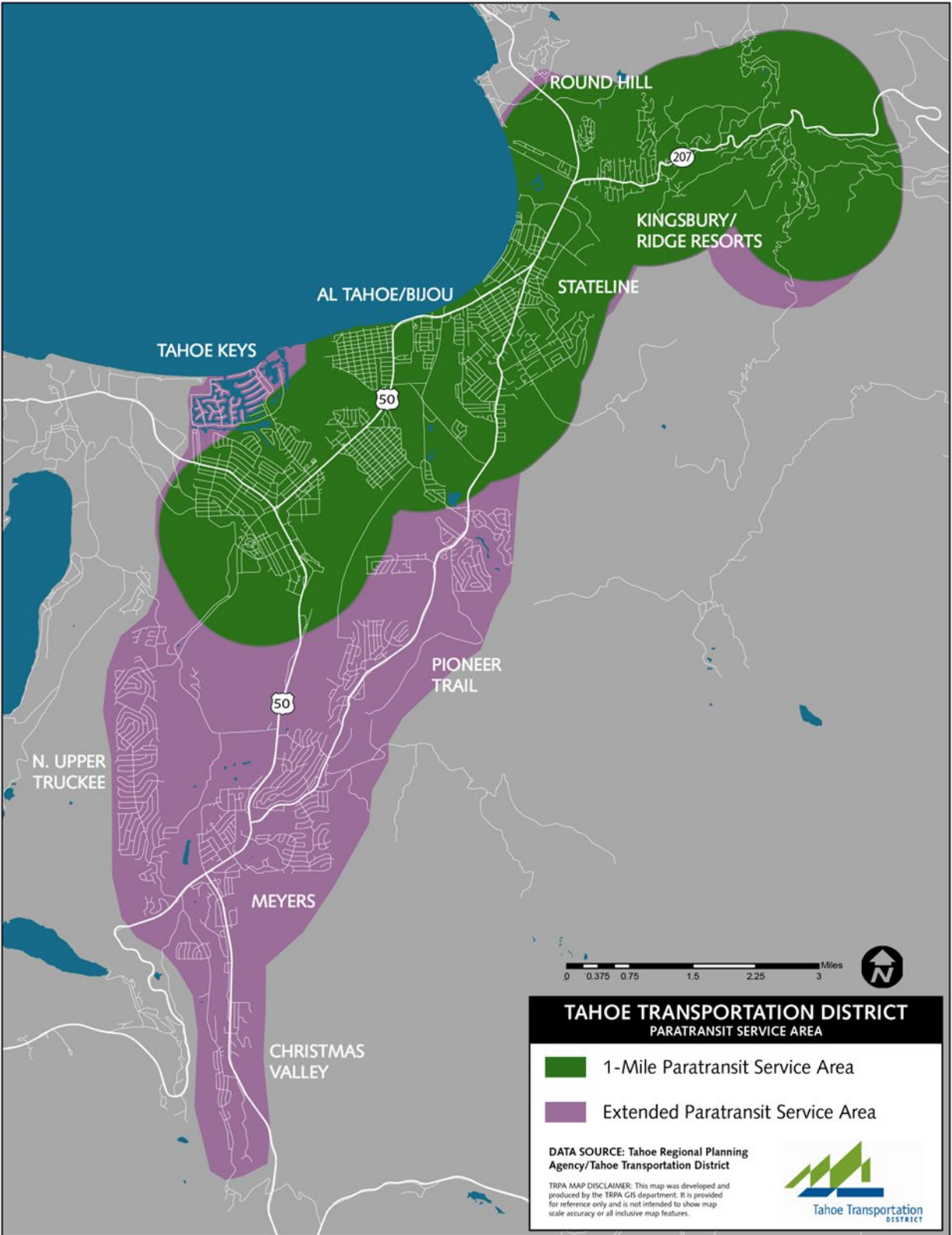
### **Service Area:**

TTD's baseline paratransit service extends beyond the three-fourths of a mile requirement to one mile; shown in green on map below. The baseline paratransit service is subject to all regulations outlined in this document.

Paratransit Service must be comparable to fixed route. It must comply with DOT ADA regulations, 49 CFR Section 37.121(a) which states, "*...each public entity operating a fixed route system shall provide paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities*

*that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system.”*

Understanding that there are several neighborhoods outside of the service area requirement, TTD offers an extended paratransit service that includes the following neighborhoods: Meyers, Christmas Valley, North Upper Truckee, southern neighborhoods near Pioneer Trail, Tahoe Keys, and Round Hill. This region is shown in lavender on the map below.



**Negotiated Trip Times:**

Passengers entering, exiting, or traveling within the extended area should expect to have their pick up and drop off time negotiated around passenger trips in the baseline paratransit service.

**Excessive Trip Length:**

TTD paratransit is a shared ride service. Other passengers will likely be picked up and dropped off along the way during the trip. Ride times are therefore longer than driving to a destination directly. Be sure to leave enough time when scheduling trips. Due to the priority given to baseline service trips, passengers entering, exiting, or traveling within the extended area should expect longer trips.

**Fares:**

Passengers entering, exiting, or traveling within the extended area may be subject to a premium fare.

**Trip Denials:**

While TTD strives to accommodate all requested trips, those in the baseline area have priority. When there is a high volume of trip reservations, or when weather conditions and snow accumulation prevent trips to certain regions, a trip may be denied.

**Trip Purpose:**

The purpose of travel may be considered when scheduling a trip that enters, exits, or travels within the extended area. Below is the priority ranking of trips.

**1st Priority:** Baseline Paratransit Service trips.

**2nd Priority:** Medical or employment trips that enter, exit, or travel within the extended area.

**3rd Priority:** Non-medical or non-employment trips that bridge the baseline and the extended areas.

**4th Priority:** Non-medical or non-employment trips within the extended area.

TTD makes every effort to accommodate passengers in the extended area; however, priority must be given to those in the baseline paratransit service, per Title 49 CFR 37.131.

Below is a quick reference guide outlining the differences between the baseline paratransit service and the extended service.

Features	Baseline Service	Extended Service
Private Transportation	No	No
Shared Ride Public Transportation	Yes	Yes
Eligibility Requirement	Yes	Yes
Required by Law (Title 49 CFR 37.131)	Yes	No
Presumptive Eligibility	Yes	Yes
Service Hours Mirror Fixed Route	Yes	Yes
Reservations Required	Yes	Yes
Cancellations Required	Yes	Yes
Consequences for No-Shows and Misconduct	Yes	Yes
Service Animals	Yes	Yes
Pets, including comfort/support animals	No	No
Trip Purpose Restrictions	No	Yes
Excessive Trip Length Monitoring	Yes	No
Negotiated Trip Times	Yes	Yes
Subscription Service	Yes	No
Trip Denials	No	Discouraged

## **CHILDREN**

Children under twelve must be accompanied by an adult.

## **TRIP RESERVATIONS AND CANCELLATIONS**

### **To Schedule a Ride:**

Please contact dispatch to schedule a reservation: (530) 541-7149, Option 3. Dispatchers are available to make reservations between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. daily. Reservations must be made at least the day before the intended ride. Same day requests may be accommodated if space is available, but there are no guarantees. Passengers who request a destination change mid-trip must have the change approved by dispatch. Only dispatch or a supervisor who can confirm capacity in the paratransit schedule may alter the schedule (i.e., manifest) to accommodate a passenger

request. Operators may not deviate from the manifest unless advised by dispatch or a supervisor on duty. Cancellations can be made after hours by leaving a message.

**NOTE: Please be aware that the paratransit service is busiest between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. During those times, anticipate more passengers and more stops during travel.**

If a requested time is not available, the dispatcher may offer a trip time up to one (1) hour before or one (1) hour after the requested trip time to accommodate all ride requests. If the passenger has an appointment, the negotiated time will be before the requested time.

Passengers are encouraged to schedule a return trip when making a reservation. Waiting to schedule a return trip (i.e., will-call option) may result in additional wait time. A will-call is when a passenger books a pick up time, but tells the dispatcher that a will-call is needed for the return trip because the exact time is unknown. TTD's goal is to accommodate will-call return trips within 90 minutes from the requested time. Passengers may request no more than one will-call for each scheduled one-way trip.

Please be aware that if the pick up location is an apartment complex, skilled nursing facility, shopping center, or similar location, the passenger must let the dispatcher know if there are any special instructions or circumstances, such as security gates, apartment building number, or multiple entries to large institutions. Otherwise, operators will pick up and drop-off at the main entrance or designated/predetermined locations. If the passenger fails to inform the dispatcher of special instructions or circumstances and the trip is missed as a result, it will be recorded as a "no-show."

Dispatch makes every effort to validate destination addresses at the time of booking. In the event that a reservation is made to an erroneous address or the passenger does not agree that the address is correct, the operator will take the passenger back to their origin (i.e., residence). If a passenger demands to disembark the bus before their destination, the operator must notify dispatch. Dispatch will call emergency personnel to ensure the safety of the passenger. The operator must wait until emergency personnel or a road supervisor arrives on the scene.

### **On Time Performance:**

An ADA paratransit trip should be similar in length to the time it would take to make the same trip on fixed-route transit. When making this comparison, all elements of fixed route trips between origins and destinations are considered including:

- Walking time to the stop from the origin address
- Waiting time
- In-vehicle time (for all trip segments)
- Transfer times (if any)
- Walking time from the final stop to the destination address

The paratransit service has a 30-minute pick up window. For example, if the pick up time is scheduled for 8:00 a.m., the vehicle may arrive any time between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. (0/+30). If the vehicle is more than 15 minutes late for the scheduled pick up time, please contact the

dispatcher at (530) 541-7149, Option 3. The vehicle will wait five (5) minutes after arrival at the designated pick up location. It is the passenger's responsibility to be ready to board the vehicle at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time. Passengers should meet the vehicle when it arrives. If a passenger misses the first leg of a trip, the second leg of the trip will not automatically be cancelled. If the second leg of the trip is no longer needed, the passenger must cancel the trip.

Passengers are expected to provide the following information to the dispatchers when making a reservation:

- Passenger name
- Number of additional passengers (e.g., PCA or companions)
- Pick up address
- Special instructions or circumstances (e.g., security gates, apartment building number, or specific locations at large institutions)
- Telephone number
- Date of ride
- The desired pick up time at the point of origin and appointment time, if applicable
- Destination or drop-off address (exact location of destination, including telephone number if possible). Certain public locations have specific drop-off and pick up areas that will be observed.
- The approximate pick up time for the return trip
- Special considerations (e.g., use of mobility device, service animal, visual impairment, etc.)

TTD's goal is to provide the greatest number of passengers with safe, prompt, efficient, and friendly service. Therefore, specific requests for the following cannot be honored:

- Specific operators
- Specific seats
- A particular vehicle
- Rides with or without certain customers

### **Plan Carefully:**

When scheduling reservations, please be prepared for the possibility of delays due to traffic, inclement weather, or other factors. Be aware of hours of operation at your destination to avoid waiting outside the building before or after business hours. Share appointment times with the dispatcher so they can help determine the most efficient way to schedule a trip.

Passengers must be ready to board the vehicle at the scheduled pick up time. If the trip is to a physician's office or other medical appointment, please inform the office that you are using the paratransit service and ask how much time should be allowed for the appointment. **It is the passenger's responsibility to determine how much time to allow for an appointment.**

### **Cancellations:**

Please contact the dispatcher immediately to cancel a reservation: (530) 541-7149, Option 3. Reservations must be cancelled at least two (2) hours before the scheduled pick-up time, otherwise it is considered a no-show and multiple no-shows may result in corrective action.

**Subscription Service:**

Subscription service is available to baseline paratransit service passengers whose trips occur weekly to the same place at the same time. TTD offers subscription service on a space-available basis. Please call (530) 541-7149, Option 3 for more information. Subscription service is not available for the extended service.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR NO-SHOWS**

A pattern or practice of no-shows is inefficient and results in less passengers being able to utilize the paratransit service. Passengers may receive corrective action for multiple no-shows, which may include the loss of their paratransit service privileges for a designated period.

A no-show is when a passenger cancels a scheduled trip within two (2) hours of the scheduled pick up time (e.g., the ride is scheduled for 4:00 pm and the passenger fails to cancel before 2:00 pm) or the passenger is unavailable at the agreed upon pick up time window and location. The operator will verify the following conditions:

- The vehicle is at the correct pick up location within the 30-minute pick up window (no more than 30 minutes after the scheduled pick up time)
- The vehicle has waited five (5) minutes for the passenger
- The operator has contacted the dispatcher to report a possible no-show
- The dispatcher confirms the scheduled pick up time and correct location with the operator; and
- The dispatcher has attempted to call the passenger at the telephone number on record.

Corrective action is imposed if there is a pattern or practice of no-shows. A pattern or practice involves intentional, repeated, or regular actions, not isolated or singular incidents. Passengers who have four no-shows in a month will be reviewed. If their no-shows exceed 20% of their scheduled trips, they may be subject to corrective action.

When a pattern and practice of no-shows is identified, TTD will contact the passenger to review the no-show policy and the days and times of the no-shows. Should a second pattern and practice of no-shows be identified, TTD will send a warning letter and call the passenger to review the no-show policy and the dates and times of the no-shows. In the event the passenger continues a pattern and practices of no-shows, the passenger will be suspended from the paratransit service for fifteen (15) days.

**No-Shows Beyond the Passenger's Control**

Trips cancelled for reasons beyond the passenger's control will be excused and not counted as no-shows. Those reasons include:

- Family emergency
- Illness that precludes the passenger from calling to cancel
- PCA who didn't arrive on time to assist
- Appointment ran long and did not provide an opportunity to cancel in a timely way
- Sudden turn for the worse in someone with a variable condition
- Adverse weather



Although no-shows will not be issued for reasons beyond the passenger's control, the passenger should always make every effort to cancel scheduled trips in a timely manner. It is the passenger's responsibility to provide a reason for not canceling a trip. Contact should be made as soon as possible so that no-shows occurring beyond a passenger's control can be excused.

### **Appeals Process:**

Passengers suspended from the paratransit service have a right to appeal the suspension pursuant to the process and procedures described in Appendix B. TTD will provide paratransit service to the individual during the appeal process.

### **CARRY-ON ITEMS**

Operators cannot assist passengers with carry-on items. In general, carry-on items are limited to what can easily be contained and controlled by the passenger and/or companion(s). Items too large or too numerous to be reasonably controlled, carried or handled by a passenger in a single trip are prohibited. In general, packages with a combined weight of no more than 30 pounds are welcome. All items must be stowed out of the aisles or walkways, may not be placed in unoccupied seats and must remain within the passenger's immediate control. Operators may refuse transport of carry-on items.

The following items are prohibited:

- Gasoline and other flammable liquids
- Firearms, BB guns, air guns, knives
- Car batteries
- Fireworks

**No weapons of any kind are allowed on Tahoe Transportation District vehicles or property.**

### **Mobility Devices:**

Passengers may bring mobility devices such as wheelchairs, walkers and rollators. TTD will transport all wheelchairs and mobility devices that can be safely accommodated by TTD vehicles and equipment.

### **Use of Portable Oxygen:**

Oxygen tanks are allowed for passengers who require oxygen. The passenger must maintain control of the oxygen tank. If the passenger cannot transport the oxygen tank or maintain control of the tank, it is recommended the passenger have a PCA to perform those functions, as operators cannot assist.

### **SAFETY**

A passenger may be subject to any reasonable accommodation requirement that will ensure the safety of themselves, other passengers, and operators. For example, a passenger may be asked to ride with a PCA if they are unable to safely board a vehicle. Passengers who engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others will

be refused service. If such a passenger's behavior improves when accompanied with a PCA, they will be provided service.

### **Wheelchair Securement:**

TTD owned buses accommodate wheelchairs, as defined by the ADA. This includes manual wheelchairs, power wheelchairs, and mobility scooters (both 3- and 4-wheeled). Mobility device users must be able to maneuver into and out of designated securement locations. TTD will transport all wheelchairs and mobility devices that can be safely accommodated by TTD vehicles and equipment. If a passenger is unsure if a wheelchair will fit, please contact dispatch at (530) 541-7149, Option 3.

Mobility devices exceeding the rated capacity of vehicle lifts may be denied access if they create safety or mechanical problems. Non-wheelchair users may use the lift when necessary, due to disabilities that result in difficulty climbing steps. Wheelchairs may not be transported with seats in a fully reclined position.

TTD has a mandatory mobility device securement policy to ensure the safety of passengers and limit potential damage to mobility devices. All mobility devices must be secured to the floor of buses/vehicles during transportation. Passengers may not unsecure their mobility devices while the vehicle is in motion. Operators will secure the wheelchair or scooter. Passengers who fail to comply with this policy may be denied transportation, in accordance with ADA regulations. Operators will call their supervisors or dispatch to report the refusal and the refusal will also be captured and preserved on video.

If a wheelchair or scooter cannot be secured adequately due to its design, or if the vehicle tie-down equipment is broken or missing, the passenger will be allowed to ride. The passenger will be informed that riding unsecured is a potential hazard to themselves and other passengers, and in the case of broken or missing tie-downs, what alternative transportation is available.

For safety, passengers using scooters (either 3- or 4-wheeled) or wheelchairs are strongly encouraged to transfer to a regular bus seat whenever possible, as recommended by most scooter manufacturers. The scooter will then be secured in the wheelchair area. Manual wheelchairs should be folded and placed out of the aisle or secured as needed. Power wheelchairs will be secured in the wheelchair space.

If both securement locations are occupied and there is a passenger in need, the operator will contact the dispatcher and advise the passenger when the next bus will arrive.

### **Use of Safety Belts:**

On those vehicles equipped with seatbelts, all passengers, including wheelchair and scooter users are strongly encouraged to use lap and shoulder belts provided. The operator will assist with the belts as needed. Postural support belts attached to the wheelchair are usually not positioned correctly to restrain the occupant safely by themselves and are not strong enough to withstand crash forces. The terrain and road conditions (e.g., snow and ice) in the Tahoe region make securement and use of lap and shoulder belts especially important.

**Boarding Belts:**

Passengers are strongly encouraged to use a boarding belt, which is a special, separate belt that is used to secure a passenger to their wheelchair while using a lift. Boarding belts are used to prevent serious injuries that could occur if a passenger falls from a lift. Operators will apply the belt as needed.

**Boarding Direction on Lifts:**

Wheelchair and scooter users should board lift platforms with their back facing the vehicle (facing outward, not looking into the vehicle). This is important for properly maneuvering the passenger's wheelchair, and for safety reasons as recommended by lift manufacturers. If a passenger is unable to board facing outward, or if they need to face inward for their own maneuverability reasons, they should alert the operator.

**Wheelchair Wheel Locks (“Brakes”):**

Wheelchair and scooter users are required to set the wheel locks or power off the device when riding up or down on a lift and when secured in the wheelchair space.

**Walkers and Rollators:**

Walkers must be placed out of the aisles and cannot be used as a seat while riding in the bus/vehicle. Walker users must always sit in a regular bus seat. Rollators (4-wheeled walkers with seats) must be folded and placed out of aisles. Rollators cannot be used as a seat while riding in the bus/vehicle. Rollator users must always sit in a regular bus seat.

**Caregiver Responsibility:**

TTD recommends that a PCA accompany passengers who are mentally or cognitively impaired or have severe memory problems. Passengers with cognitive impairments will only be allowed to use the paratransit service if the passenger exhibits safe behavior in the vehicle. An attendant or caregiver should be present at the pick up and drop-off points for passengers who cannot be safely left on their own at either the pick up or drop-off point. It is the responsibility of the passenger's caregiver or family to inform TTD of such passengers.

An adult accompanying a child is responsible for the child. If assistance is needed for a child, please bring a companion to assist with the child. Operators are not permitted to carry children on or off the vehicle. Children under the age of eight or under 4 feet 9 inches tall are required by law to use a child safety seat or other safety restraint system. Passengers are responsible for providing such safety equipment and for securing it and the child.

**SERVICE ANIMALS**

Under DOT ADA regulations, the definition of a service animal is an animal “individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.” If an animal's only function is to provide emotional support or comfort for the passenger, that animal would not fall under the regulatory training-based definition of a service animal. Pets and animals that are not service animals are not permitted on TTD buses or in transit facilities. TTD is committed to providing safe and comfortable service to all passengers, including passengers with disabilities who travel with trained service animals or service animals-in-training. Trained service animals may

accompany passengers free of charge. The qualified medical professional completing Part C of the Application for Paratransit Service should indicate the passenger's need for a service animal. When scheduling a trip, please inform the dispatcher of the service animal. Please review the rules and important responsibilities for service animals on buses and in transit facilities.

The owner is responsible for controlling and directing the service animal. Do not ask operators or other passengers to hold the animal or their leash.

- Service animals must be under the complete control of the passenger they serve at all times.
- Aggressive or dominant behavior will not be tolerated. This could include snarling, growling and jumping up at other people or other service animals. This represents a safety concern for other passengers and the operator.
- Service animals must not block the vehicle aisle, path of travel, or doors.
- Service animals must not occupy passenger seats in vehicles or at transit facilities.
- Customers accompanied by service animals are expected to promptly clean up after their animals whenever necessary and without being requested. Animals must be clean and pest-free. Please respect the health and safety of other passengers and service animals.
- Service animals that appear abused or mistreated will be reported to the appropriate organizations.

### **OPERATOR ASSISTANCE POLICY**

Operators are not permitted to enter any home or go beyond the threshold (i.e., doorway) of any building. Operators are required to maintain visual contact with the vehicle at all times. Operators may enter into the main lobby of a business for the exclusive purpose of notifying a passenger that the vehicle is available for boarding, provided they are able to maintain line-of-sight contact with the vehicle at all times.

In locations where operators cannot maintain line-of-sight with their vehicle and go to the door to notify passengers of the arrival of their ride, passengers may request telephone notification of the bus's arrival for that specific location. This request may require special arrangements with third parties and is subject to review, so please contact the dispatcher at (530) 541-7149, Option 3 to make the request.

Operators must assist individuals with disabilities in the use of ramps, lifts, and securement systems. If it is necessary for the operator to leave their seat to provide this assistance, they must do so. On a vehicle which uses a ramp for entry, the operator may have to assist in pushing a manual wheelchair up the ramp, particularly if the ramp slope is relatively steep. Operators must ensure that passengers with disabilities are able to take advantage of the accessibility and safety features on vehicles.

Operators are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs, or to physically lift passengers. Operators are not permitted to carry objects or to load or unload passenger's carry-on items. It is the passenger's responsibility to load, unload and control all carry-on items. Passengers needing more assistance than the operators are allowed to provide are encouraged to make other arrangements for assistance at their pick up and drop-off points.

Operators are prohibited from carrying items when providing door-to-door service. Any passenger who may require assistance with carrying items is asked to have a PCA or companion.

## **PASSENGER BEHAVIOR**

TTD's policy is to provide the safest and most efficient service to all passengers. Passengers shall respect one another and the operators and shall avoid any behavior that threatens the safety and comfort of others, including the following:

- **Abusive Conduct** – Any abusive, offensive, or threatening act or behavior that adversely impacts the safety or security of the operator and/or the passengers, or invades the privacy rights of others, such as touching another person in a rude, insolent or angry manner. Sexual harassment, verbal or physical, will not be tolerated. Examples also include profanity, screaming, hitting, etc.
- **Direct Threat** – Any act or condition that creates a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.
- **Electronic Equipment** – Customers may only operate audio or visual equipment that is silent.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF MISCONDUCT**

Misconduct that is not the direct and immediate result of a passenger's disability, such as abusive language that is the consequence of Tourette's syndrome or socially unacceptable behavior brought on by a mental illness, shall be considered intentional misconduct. Consequences of intentional misconduct will be addressed as noted below after counseling with the passenger:

A passenger may be subject to any reasonable accommodation requirement that will ensure the safety of all passengers and operators.

- A passenger whose behavior improves when accompanied with a PCA will be provided service.
- A passenger may be required to attend training or receive additional counseling in proper transit conduct.

The accommodation requirement may last for a time period sufficient to allow the passenger to learn appropriate behavior.

- The accommodation requirement may be permanent if the conduct is beyond the passenger's control.
- If a passenger commits an act of misconduct that he or she has been trained to know is inappropriate, that act is considered intentional.

No passenger whose access to the paratransit service has been suspended for any reason shall lose his or her eligibility certification by reason of such suspension. Passengers will be notified in writing before TTD takes any of these steps. An eligible passenger whose service is to be suspended because of intentional misconduct has a right to request a hearing through the appeals process and procedures described in Appendix B.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Passengers are responsible for keeping track of personal belongings. If a passenger discovers they left something on a vehicle, please contact customer service at (530) 541-7149, Option 2. The passenger will be contacted if the item is located. The passenger will have 30 days to retrieve the item before it is donated to charity or disposed.

## **CONTACT**

Customer feedback is valuable and problems can only be resolved if management is aware of the issue, so please do not hesitate to call. If there are questions or complaints, please call TTD at (775) 589-5500, Option 2. Alternatively, you may provide feedback on the TTD website by submitting a Passenger Comment Form at: [www.tahoetransportation.org/passenger-comment-form/](http://www.tahoetransportation.org/passenger-comment-form/)

The process for filing complaints, and subsequent review, is described in Appendix C.

## APPENDIX A

### I. TTD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

There are two categories of eligibility: permanent (chronic condition) and temporary (acute). Any person who has a physical, mental, or psychological disability or incapacity of less than six months' duration that is covered in the eligibility criteria is considered to be in the temporary category, and his or her eligibility is limited to the duration of meeting the criteria. All other persons meeting eligibility criteria have chronic conditions.

Applications will remain on file as a medical record, not subject to public view. Applicants whose requests for certification are denied have the right to appeal pursuant to the appeals process in Appendix B.

#### EXCLUSIONS

The following conditions, alone, are not considered a disability: 1) pregnancy, 2) acute or chronic alcoholism or drug addiction, or 3) contagious diseases.

#### PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

##### SECTION 1

**Nonambulatory Disabilities; Wheelchair:** Impairments that, regardless of cause, confine individuals permanently to wheelchairs.

##### SECTION 2

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Mobility Aid:** Impairments that require individuals to use a long leg brace, a walker, or crutches to achieve mobility.

##### SECTION 3

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Arthritis:** Persons who, due to any cause, suffer arthritis which causes a functional motor deficit in any two major limbs (arms and/or legs).

American Rheumatism Association criteria may be used as a guideline for the determination of arthritic handicap. Therapeutic Grade III or worse and Functional Class III or worse and Anatomical State III or worse are evidence of arthritic handicap.

##### SECTION 4

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Loss of Limb:** Persons who suffer amputation of or anatomical deformity of one hand or one foot (i.e., loss of major function due to degenerative changes associated with vascular or neurological deficits, traumatic loss of muscle mass or tendons and X-ray evidence of bony or fibrous ankylosis [a stiffness or "fixation" of a joint caused by fibrous

or bony tissue accumulating in a joint space] at an unfavorable angle, or joint subluxation [incomplete or partial dislocation of a joint or instability]); persons who suffer amputation of lower extremity at or above the tarsal region -- one or both legs.

## **SECTION 5**

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Stroke:** Cerebrovascular accident with one of the following occurring post-CVA:

- a. Pseudobulbar palsy (spastic weakness of the muscles innervated by the cranial nerves);
- b. Functional motor deficit in the arms or legs;
- c. Ataxia affecting extremities substantiated by appropriate cerebellar signs or proprioceptive loss.

## **SECTION 6**

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Pulmonary Ills:** Persons suffering respiratory impairment as defined by The Journal of the American Medical Association, "Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, The Respiratory System."

### **CLASSES OF RESPIRATORY IMPAIRMENT:**

**Class III:** Dyspnea does not occur at rest but does occur during the usual activities of daily living. However, the patient can walk a mile at his own pace without dyspnea although he cannot keep pace on the level with others of the same age and body build. Percent disability: 40-50.

**Class IV:** Dyspnea occurs during such activities as climbing one flight of stairs or walking 100 yards on the level.

**Class VI:** Dyspnea present on slightest exertion, such as dressing, talking, at rest.

## **SECTION 7**

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Cardiac Illnesses:** Persons suffering functional classifications of cardiac disease, Classes III and IV and therapeutic classification Classes C, D, and E as defined by Diseases of the Heart and Blood Vessels -- Nomenclature and Criteria for Diagnosis.

### **FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS:**

**CLASS III:** Patients with cardiac disease resulting in marked limitation of physical activity. They are comfortable at rest. Less than ordinary physical activity causes fatigue, palpitation, dyspnea, or anginal pain. For instance, inability to walk one or more level blocks or climb a flight of ordinary stairs.



**CLASS IV:** Patients with cardiac disease resulting in inability to carry on any physical activity without discomfort. Symptoms of cardiac insufficiency or of the anginal syndrome may be present even at rest. If any physical activity is undertaken, discomfort is increased.

**THERAPEUTIC CLASSIFICATIONS:**

**CLASS C:** Patients with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be moderately restricted and whose more strenuous efforts should be discontinued.

**CLASS D:** Patients with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be markedly restricted.

**CLASS E:** Patients with cardiac disease who should be at complete rest, confined to bed or chair.

**SECTION 8**

**Semi-ambulatory Disabilities; Dialysis:** Persons who in order to live must use a kidney dialysis machine.

**SECTION 9**

**Visual Disabilities:** This section includes only the legally blind.

- a. Those persons whose vision in the better eye after best correction is 20/200 or less; and
- b. Those persons whose visual field is contracted (commonly known as tunnel vision):
  - 1. to 10 degrees or less from a point of fixation; or
  - 2. the widest diameter subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees.

**SECTION 10**

**Hearing Disabilities:** Deafness or hearing incapacity that may make an individual insecure in public areas because the individual is unable to communicate or hear warning signals. This section includes only those persons whose hearing loss is 90dba or greater in the 500, 1000, 2000 Hz. ranges.

**SECTION 11**

**Disabilities of Incoordination:** This section includes those persons suffering faulty coordination or palsy from brain, spinal, or peripheral nerve injury and persons with a functional motor deficit in any two limbs or who suffer manifestations which significantly reduce mobility, coordination, and perceptiveness not accounted for in previous categories.

## DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

### SECTION 12

**Borderline Intellectual Functioning:** Those persons, not psychotic, who are so developmentally disadvantaged from infancy or before reaching maturity that they are incapable of managing themselves and their affairs independently, with ordinary prudence, or of being taught to do so, and who require supervision, control, and care for their own welfare, or for the welfare of others, or for the welfare of the community; and any person who is unable, or likely to be unable, to physically or mentally respond to an oral instruction relating to danger and, unassisted, take appropriate action relating to such danger. This section includes only those persons with the following disorders who are participating in a state or federally funded or state-recognized program.

### SECTION 13

**Intellectual Disability:** Refers to sub-average general intellectual functioning which originates during the developmental period and is associated with impairment in adaptive behavior (a general guideline is IQ which is two or more standard deviations below the norm). This section also applies to adults who by reason of illness or accident suffer an intellectual disability.

### SECTION 14

**Autism Spectrum Disorder:** (1) A syndrome described as consisting of withdrawal, very inadequate social relationships, exceptional object relationships, language disturbances, and monotonously repetitive motor behavior; many children with autism will also be seriously impaired in general intellectual function; (2) this syndrome usually appears before the age of six and is characterized by severe withdrawal and inappropriate response to external stimuli.

## PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

### SECTION 15

Individuals with significant psychiatric disabilities who cannot complete the tasks necessary to ride fixed route service independently. For example, some individuals with severe anxiety disorders may experience overwhelming physical and psychiatric reactions that prevent them from concentrating on and completing the tasks needed to independently use fixed route transit.

## OTHER DISABILITIES

### SECTION 16

**Neurological Disorders:** Neurological disorders are diseases of the central and peripheral nervous system. In other words, the brain, spinal cord, cranial nerves, peripheral nerves, nerve roots, autonomic nervous system, neuromuscular junction, and muscles. These disorders include cerebral palsy, epilepsy, Alzheimer disease and other dementias, cerebrovascular

diseases including stroke, migraine and other headache disorders, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, neuroinfections, brain tumors, traumatic disorders of the nervous system such as brain trauma, and neurological disorders as a result of malnutrition.

## **II. DEFINITION OF ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBLE**

TTD's eligibility criteria was developed under the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Transportation Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which defines "ADA paratransit eligible" as:

1. Any person with a disability who can use an accessible vehicle, but for whom any desired trip cannot be made because the fixed-route service he/she needs to use is not yet accessible. This category includes those persons who use wheelchairs, walkers or braces and others whose disabilities prevent them from utilizing an inaccessible vehicle or facility.
2. Persons, who because of the nature of their disabilities, cannot navigate a transit system that is otherwise accessible. This category includes persons who because of their disability cannot independently board, ride or disembark from an accessible vehicle. This is based on the assumption the individual will not and need not be able to operate a boarding system, such as a wheelchair lift, ramp or securement device. The presence of a traveling companion does not affect this eligibility.
3. Persons with impairment-related conditions that prevent them from getting to or from a boarding or disembarking location. This relates to an individual's particular functional disability. This eligibility requires functional evaluation of its application to a particular system and a particular trip. Examples of eligibility under this category include severe, chronic fatigue related to HIV infection and AIDS, heat sensitivity due to cardiovascular disease and hypothermia due to quadriplegia.

Generally, the following four tests are applied when determining an applicant's eligibility:

1. Does the individual's disability prevent him/her from getting to and from a bus stop at the point of origin or destination?
2. Can the individual board, utilize and disembark the vehicle at the bus stop?
3. Can the individual recognize the destination and disembark the bus?
4. If the passenger's trip requires transfers, are the paths of travel between routes accessible and navigable by the individual?

## **APPENDIX B TTD APPEALS PROCESS**

The following process and procedures shall apply for appeals of eligibility certifications and passenger suspensions.

### **REQUESTS FOR HEARING**

A hearing to appeal a decision will be held only after a written Request for Hearing is filed with the Transportation Services Director.

- Requests for Hearing must be in writing and must contain the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) requesting the hearing, and the name of the passenger, if different from the requestor.
- Persons submitting a Request for Hearing are strongly encouraged to include a statement of the reason(s) why they believe the decision of eligibility or to suspend service is inappropriate.
- Requests for Hearings regarding a notice of eligibility must be filed within sixty (60) calendar days after a person has received written notice of eligibility or suspension and will be deemed filed when received by the Transportation Services Director.
- Requests for Hearings regarding a notice of suspension must be filed immediately to stay the suspension and will be deemed filed when received by the Transportation Services Director. Suspensions will be stayed pending the outcome of the appeal.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND REQUESTER**

- The Transportation Services Director will set the time and place of the hearing when the request is filed and will notify the requester. The time of the hearing will be within ten (10) days after the request is filed (excluding holidays).
- Hearings may be postponed or rescheduled only upon written request to the Transportation Services Director and for good cause.
- The requestor may use the paratransit service to travel to and from the hearing.
- The requestor may waive his or her right to personally appear at the hearing and have the matter determined based solely on the record, but must do so by filing a written request with the Transportation Services Director before the hearing.
- If the requestor waives his or her right to personally appear, the requestor may submit documents and other information to the Transportation Services Director to be included with the record and considered in deciding the appeal.
- If the requestor fails to appear at the hearing, and gives no prior notice, the Transportation Services Director will make a determination based on the available evidence, as appropriate.

### **ADA APPEALS COMMITTEE**

Appeals will be considered by the ADA Appeals Committee which shall be comprised of three (3) persons: the Transportation Services Director or his/her designee; a member of an appropriate social service agency; and a member of the disabled community familiar with the paratransit service. Individuals involved in the appeals process will sign confidentiality policy statements.

## **CONDUCT OF HEARINGS**

The manner of conducting hearings is under the direction, control and discretion of the Transportation Services Director. These guidelines govern issues, evidence, and documents:

- The issues to be decided at the hearing are limited to those set forth in the notice of eligibility or suspension and the Request for Hearing.
- Evidence commonly relied upon by reasonable, prudent persons will be heard and considered. Specifically, this includes statements (oral and written), documents and copies of documents, video and/or audio recordings, and official and business reports. Irrelevant, immaterial, redundant or unduly repetitious evidence will be excluded.
- A record of the hearing (electronic or otherwise) will be kept by the Transportation Services Director.
- A verbatim transcript of the proceedings, if desired, must be arranged and paid for by the requester.

## **DECISIONS**

All hearing decisions will be in writing. Decisions will be rendered at the conclusion of the hearing or as soon thereafter as a decision can be made. Within five (5) business days, the Transportation Services Director will notify the appellant in writing of the decision and the reasons for the decision. If upholding eligibility TTD determination, the letter must describe the specific reasons for the decision. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the decision from being made within 30 days after completion of the appeals process, paratransit service will be provided to the individual until a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

## **APPENDIX C TTD COMPLAINT PROCESS**

TTD seeks to provide a user-friendly method of resolving concerns fairly and efficiently. However, we can only resolve problems if we are informed, so please do not hesitate to contact us.

If there is a complaint about TTD's service, please contact the dispatcher at (530) 541-7149, Option 2 or complete a passenger comment form online at: [tahoetransportation.org/passenger-comment-form/](http://tahoetransportation.org/passenger-comment-form/). Be prepared to provide name, address, phone number and a detailed explanation of the complaint (e.g., date and time of incident, vehicle number, operator's name, etc.) This will allow staff to investigate and respond to the complaint more completely.

If the complaint is still not resolved to your satisfaction within ten (10) business days, please submit the complaint in writing to:

TTD  
Transportation Services Director  
P.O. Box 499  
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448

You may request to meet personally with the Transportation Services Director to discuss the problem and/or request a written response within ten (10) business days. The Transportation Services Director has the discretion to enlist the assistance of other resources, as appropriate, in resolving the problem, e.g., other TTD staff, the management and staff of contractor, etc. as appropriate. The decision of the Transportation Services Director shall be final.