



City of Asheville Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

OVERVIEW

The City of Asheville provides next-day complementary paratransit service to people with disabilities who are unable to independently use the ART (Asheville Redefines Transit) fixed-route bus system due to a disability covered by the ADA. Mountain Mobility provides the service during equivalent hours as ART routes. The service area is as follows:

- Sunday: Within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of operating ART routes
- Monday-Saturday: Citywide and within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of all ART routes
- Holiday Service Days: Citywide and within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of all ART routes
- Thanksgiving Day: No service
- Christmas Day: No service

Service is shared-ride public transportation that is available for a variety of purposes, including shopping, higher education, medical appointments, and work. The fare is \$2.00 per one-way trip.

For information on eligibility and ART complementary paratransit services, contact Mountain Mobility at (828) 250-6750, Extension 5. For TTY/text to voice communications, dial Relay 711 or the toll free number for Relay North Carolina 1-800-735-2962.

ELIGIBILITY

Complementary paratransit service is available to any person unable to independently use the ART fixed-route bus system due to a disability covered by the ADA. You must submit a complete **Paratransit Eligibility Application** to Mountain Mobility to begin using the service. The application process requires the applicant to obtain a **Standard Professional Verification Form** from a certified medical or social service provider. If you need transportation to obtain **Standard Professional Verification Form**, a 30-day temporary eligibility period will be granted so you can visit your provider. For more information on the **Standard Professional Verification Form**, see Part 5 of the **Paratransit Eligibility Application**.

You can submit your **Paratransit Eligibility Application** by mail or email. Your certified medical or social service provider can submit your **Standard Professional Verification Form** on your behalf by mail (with the certified provider's return address) or email. You can submit your **Standard Professional Verification Form** by mail but the letter must be on the certified provider's letterhead and must be in an envelope sealed by the certified provider. Documentation not fitting these requirements may be accepted, but Mountain Mobility staff may follow up by phone or email before final approval is determined (a 30-day temporary eligibility period may be allowed in these cases).



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

The *Paratransit Eligibility Application* and *Standard Professional Verification Form* may be sent to the following address and/or email address:

Mountain Mobility Administration
339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806
mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org

Eligibility Recertification

During the review of your application, you will be identified as fully eligible or temporarily eligible.

If you are certified as **fully eligible** (typically due to permanent disability), you will need to go through a very simple recertification process every five (5) years. You will be contacted to ensure your contact information is current and to update any other information necessary to provide service. A new *Paratransit Eligibility Application* and *Standard Professional Verification Form* will not be required.

If you are certified as **temporarily eligible** (typically due to temporary disability or for other cause identified in your documentation), you will need to go through a complete eligibility recertification process every six (6) months. A new *Paratransit Eligibility Application* and *Standard Professional Verification Form* will be required during each recertification process.

Eligible Visitors

Complementary paratransit service is available to anyone visiting the City of Asheville. Eligibility will be based on one of the following:

1. Presenting documentation of complementary paratransit service eligibility from the fixed route transit system providing service to the area in which you principally reside. Mountain Mobility will give full faith and credit in honoring the identification card or eligibility documentation from another entity.
2. Visitors with apparent disabilities will present identification showing that the individual resides outside Buncombe County.
3. Visitors without apparent disabilities (e.g. cardiac or cognitive conditions) will be asked to complete a *Paratransit Eligibility Application*.

Once a visitor has presented satisfactory documentation as described above to Mountain Mobility, the visitor will be eligible for thirty (30) days of service within a 365-day period.



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

FARES

The fare for complementary paratransit service is \$2.00 for a one-way trip. Official Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) travel free with an ADA customer. A companion/guest is charged the same \$2.00 fare as the eligible customer. Please have the exact fare ready. Operators do not make change or accept checks. Fares must be paid at the time of boarding a vehicle. Unpaid fares may result in a requirement to purchase fare tickets in advance of each trip and/or may result in suspension of paratransit service until any unpaid fares are collected.

RESERVATION SERVICES

Reservations for complementary paratransit service can be made seven days a week by calling Mountain Mobility at (828) 250-6750, Extension 4. Reservations can be made up to thirty (30) days before the requested day of travel and by 5 p.m. the day before the requested day of travel. Reservations cannot be made on the requested day of travel or after 5 p.m. the day before the requested day of travel.

Mountain Mobility's regular office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Reservation requests are accepted outside of regular office hours by leaving your reservation information on the answering machine. Whether speaking directly with Mountain Mobility staff or leaving a reservation request message, all of the following information must be provided in order for Mountain Mobility to accept the reservation:

- Your name
- The day and date of your trip
- The exact street address of each pickup location and destination, including the building or facility name, apartment, building or suite numbers, and if you have it, a phone number for your destination
- What type of mobility aid(s) you will be traveling with?
- The number of people traveling - will you be taking a companion or PCA?
- The time you need to be at your destination (drop-off time) and the time you need to be picked up from your destination for your return trip
- A phone number where you can be reached if there are any questions about your reservation

Reservation requests which omit any of the above required information will not be able to be processed.



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

Mountain Mobility may need to negotiate pickup times in order to balance multiple requests, but will always work to identify a pickup time for customers within a two-hour window (up to one hour before and as much as one hour after the requested time) of the customer's requested time. Complementary paratransit service is a shared-ride service. Mountain Mobility staff will do their best to accommodate your trip request with as direct a route possible.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

Subscription service is available for trips that need to be scheduled to the same destination, at the same time, two or more times within the same week, for at least two weeks. Once an initial reservation is made, there is no need for additional reservation calls. To cancel a subscription trip or end an established subscription service, please call (828) 250-6750, Extension 2.

TRAVEL GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Door-to-Door Service

Mountain Mobility provides “door-to-door” service whenever possible. The operator will come to your door to let you know the bus has arrived. However, there will be some locations and/or situations where it is not possible for the operator to leave the vehicle. If you are able to wait at the curb or at the designated pick-up location, please do so.

Vehicles and Operators (Drivers)

Mountain Mobility operates 36 vans that are equipped with lifts to aid customers using assistive devices. All vehicles are well maintained and are thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis.

Mountain Mobility operators receive thorough training, including but not limited to: defensive driving, customer assistance and sensitivity, first aid, adult and infant CPR, and ADA requirements. Each operator is experienced and properly licensed, has a good driving record, and is familiar with the City of Asheville's roads and highways. All operators must have clean criminal background checks and must pass ongoing drug and alcohol screenings.

Operators will assist customers who are unable to maneuver themselves from their door to the vehicle provided it is safe for them to do so.

Operators are allowed to:

- Maneuver your manual wheelchair if you need help from your door to the vehicle.
- Lend a steady arm if you need assistance.



City of Asheville Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

Operators are not allowed to:

- Maneuver your electric mobility device (i.e. electric wheelchair or scooter)
- Maneuver or push you, your equipment or shopping cart up or down stairs, steep inclines or driveways
- Enter residences
- Lift or carry riders
- Carry packages or other items

Arrivals and Late Arrivals

Customers should be ready to depart when the vehicle arrives. Operators are instructed to wait no longer than five (5) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. Vehicles arriving within fifteen (15) minutes before or as much as fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time are considered within the window for service.

Mountain Mobility strives to provide on-time service; however, many factors may result in a delayed pick-up. If your vehicle has not arrived within the window for service, please call the Dispatch office, open during all service hours, at (828) 250-6750 (Extension 1). Please do not call until after the 15-minute pick-up window has expired as the vehicle may arrive while you are on the phone.

Gated Communities

If a pick-up is within a gated community, it is the customer's responsibility to arrange entry for the vehicle. When signing up for complementary paratransit service, you will be asked to provide an entry code for the vehicle. Any changes should be reported to Mountain Mobility staff at (828) 250-6750, Extension 5. If a vehicle is unable to enter the pick-up area or the customer fails to meet the vehicle outside of the community, the trip will be designated as a no-show.

Animals at Customer's Residence

Animals at a customer's residence must be restrained prior to Mountain Mobility operators providing any assistance. An operator who is unable to access a customer's home due to a loose animal may notify the dispatcher. If the dispatcher is unable to make contact with the customer, or the customer does not board, the trip will be recorded as a no-show and the return trip will be canceled.

Shared-Ride Rules and Guidelines

Since the City of Asheville's ADA Paratransit Service through Mountain Mobility is a shared-ride service, please be courteous to other riders. In order to assure a pleasant trip for all, please observe the following rules:



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

- No eating or drinking is allowed on the vehicle.
- Smoking or vaping is prohibited on the vehicle.
- No firearms allowed on the vehicle.
- Proper attire, including shirts and shoes, are required on the vehicle.
- Music devices are allowed with headphones **if** the sound is not audible to others.
- Please do not distract the operator while the vehicle is in motion.

Due to the shared-ride nature of the service, riders who require medication or oxygen at regular intervals should be advised that their travel time could be up to 90 minutes depending on trip distance.

Destinations

Destinations may not be changed on the day of service. Each scheduled destination will be treated as a separate trip and must be scheduled as a separate trip. Each trip requires payment of a separate fare.

Wheelchairs and Mobility Devices

All customers who require an accessible vehicle with securements and a lift are guaranteed a ride in an accessible vehicle. However, it is the customer's responsibility to ensure that there are adequate sidewalks and ramps to get from their home or pickup location to the paratransit vehicle. Operators will assist customers in boarding and de-boarding the vehicle as needed, but are prohibited from lifting or carrying riders. All mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters and walkers must be secured in the vehicle. Mountain Mobility vehicles can accommodate occupied mobility devices weighing up to 800 pounds and measuring up to 33 inches in width and 53 inches in length. Please note that we cannot provide service for occupied mobility devices with weights or dimensions that exceed lift maximums.

For customer safety and comfort, Mountain Mobility requires that customers wear seatbelts unless medical certification is provided stating the customer cannot use them for medical reasons. Customers using three-wheel scooters are strongly encouraged to transfer out of their scooter into the seat of the paratransit vehicle whenever possible. Mobility devices that are broken or damaged to the extent that they pose an immediate safety threat cannot be transported.

If a change in your condition changes your use of a mobility device or type of mobility device used, this change to your condition and mobility device should be reported to Mountain Mobility within 15 days by calling (828) 250-6750, Extension 5.



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

Children

Before a child will be permitted to board a Mountain Mobility vehicle, a parent or legal guardian must sign a *Mountain Mobility Authorization Form for the Provision of Transportation to Children*. Children under 18 years old must be accompanied by a responsible party. Children under 8 years old or who weigh less than 80 pounds must be secured in an approved child safety seat provided by Mountain Mobility. Child safety seats provided by the customer may not be used. Strollers must be collapsed to fit between the seat and the rider. Non-collapsible strollers are prohibited. Under no circumstances may a child sit on an adult's lap.

Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) and Guests

Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) ride free when accompanying an individual certified as requiring a PCA. The need for a PCA will be determined through the eligibility process. One (1) additional companion/guest is permitted to ride along with the customer for a \$2.00 fare. At the time a reservation is made, the Mountain Mobility customer service representative must be informed of any additional individuals who will be traveling with the customer on the day of the trip.

Service Animals

Service animals are permitted to travel in Mountain Mobility vehicles. A service animal is a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but 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. A service animal must sit on the floor or on the customer's lap. A service animal may not occupy a passenger seat. At the time a reservation is made, the Mountain Mobility customer service representative must be informed if a service animal will be traveling with the customer on the day of the trip.

Unattended Customer Policy

Customers certified as unable to be left unattended (based on age, diminished mental capacity, or special request of the responsible party) must make the necessary arrangements to be met by an attendant at each destination and the customer's residence.

The operator will only wait five (5) minutes for an attendant to meet the customer who requires attending. If an attendant does not arrive, the operator will notify the dispatcher on duty and continue on their route. The dispatcher on duty will attempt to reach the customer's emergency contact person. If the customer is not met by the end of the route, they will be returned to the Mountain Mobility offices. The customer will not be left unattended, and the police will be notified to assist in locating a responsible party. Customers who must continue on a route



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

beyond their scheduled destination because an attendant is not available at a destination may be subject to suspension of services.

Carry-on Bags

Due to space limitations and safety concerns, customers are only permitted to bring/purchase what they themselves can carry and travel with in their lap on paratransit vehicles. If a customer brings more than the allowable packages, it will be the customer's choice on whether to board with only what they can carry and travel with in their lap and find alternative transportation to carry the remaining packages, or decline the trip. *A PCA or companion is not permitted to carry additional packages.* Shopping carts or any type of equipment used to assist with transporting packages, groceries, clothing or other items the customer is unable to physically carry are not permitted.

Cancellations and No-Shows

In order to keep our service cost-effective and convenient for all riders, **you must call Mountain Mobility to cancel at least two (2) hours in advance of your scheduled pickup time if you know you will be unable to travel.** Customers are encouraged to cancel reservations as soon as they know a trip will not be taken. Voice mail service is available outside of regular office hours.

If a customer elects not to take a trip or cancels the trip less than two (2) hours before the appointment time, a no-show trip is recorded. After 3 no-shows in a calendar month, riders will be sent a warning letter by the City of Asheville notifying them about excessive no-shows. If a rider accumulates three (3) more no-shows in the next calendar month, they will receive a phone call from the City of Asheville.

Disruptive Behavior

Mountain Mobility reserves the right to refuse transportation or service to anyone whose conduct is or has been known to be obnoxious, offensive, intimidating, violent, disorderly, or hazardous, and could result in the disruption of vehicle operations or serious impairment to the health and safety of others.

Suspensions and Appeals

Customers who demonstrate repetitive patterns of refusal to follow policies and guidelines, including but not limited to illegal, unsafe, unruly, or disruptive behaviors, are subject to a suspension of service by Mountain Mobility. Mountain Mobility's suspension policy follows a three-incident format. After three (3) incidents, transportation privileges can be suspended for up to 30 days. All persons affected are entitled to request an appeal relating to the imposition of sanctions. Riders have 30 days to file for an appeal. The imposition of sanctions under the



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

policy may be stayed pending the outcome of an appeal. All complementary paratransit service customer suspension-related appeals should contact the City of Asheville and/or Mountain Mobility.

City of Asheville
Transportation Planning Manager
70 Court Plaza
Asheville, NC 28011

Mountain Mobility Administration
339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call Mountain Mobility at (828) 250-6750 to sign up for services (Extension 5), make a reservation (Extension 4), or inquire about scheduling (Extension 2). Additional information is available by visiting Mountain Mobility's website at: www.buncombecounty.org/transportation.

If you require Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) to reach us, please dial **7-1-1** from your TTY phone or other device.

ANY QUESTIONS?

We want to hear from you. Please contact Mountain Mobility at (828) 250-6750, Extension 6, to ask a question or leave us your comments, suggestions or commendations. If you prefer, you can write to:

City of Asheville Transportation
70 Court Plaza
Asheville, NC 28011

Mountain Mobility Administration
339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806

You can also email us at: mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org.

If your comment involves a concern, please try to provide as much detail as possible so your concern can be properly addressed. For example, if you are reporting a situation involving a paratransit vehicle, providing the exact date, vehicle number, and estimated time are all helpful.



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

COMPLAINTS

The City of Asheville is committed to its Non-Discrimination Policy. If you have been subjected to discrimination, you may file a complaint with the City of Asheville or the Federal Transit Administration. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of **race, color, or national origin**, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (42 USC Section 200d).

The City of Asheville is committed to ensuring that no qualified **individual with a disability** shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by a the City of Asheville, its contractors nor sub-recipients. (Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990).

Complaints for both Title VI and ADA must be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination. Complaint forms can be found at www.ridetheart.com, or for more information call (828) 232-4531, email iride@ashevillenc.gov, or visit our office at the Transportation Department in City Hall.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

ART Bus Services

If you are able to use the regular bus system, there are many advantages to doing so. These include:

- **Lower fare.** The fare for ADA complementary paratransit service with Mountain Mobility is \$2.00 per one-way trip. The City of Asheville's ART service is either \$1.00 per one-way trip, or 50¢ per one-way trip if you qualify for one of ART's many discounts (Medicare recipients, elementary, middle and high school students ages 6-19, and recipients of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI)).
- **More flexibility.** Complementary paratransit service requires you to call and schedule a trip at least one day in advance. ART's routes operate on a fixed schedule and most operate every hour, so you can plan your trips ahead (using Google Maps trip planner) or on the spur of the moment, no reservation required. ART also offers real-time access to the arrival time of your bus using Nextbus.com. Visit www.ridetheart.com for more information.



City of Asheville
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Paratransit Guidelines

Paratransit Services Provided by Mountain Mobility

828.250.6750 • mountainmobility@buncombecounty.org • 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140 – Asheville, NC 28806

R.I.D.E. Voucher Program

Ridership Independence for the Disabled and Elderly (R.I.D.E.) is a program coordinated by Mountain Mobility to afford Buncombe County's older adults and citizens with disabilities the opportunity for increased independence by offering a discounted "\$10 off coupon" for use with various taxi and paratransit companies within Buncombe County. For more information on the R.I.D.E program, contact Mountain Mobility at (828) 250-6750, Extension 5, or visit the website at www.buncombecountyride.com.

Senior Bus Pass Program

Mountain Mobility offers an incentive to seniors who can use regular bus services. The Senior Bus Pass Program provides a monthly ART bus pass to eligible seniors at no cost to them. There are a limited number of free passes distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. If the supply of free passes runs out, you can choose to go on the waiting list to receive a pass as they become available. For more information on the Senior Bus Pass Program, contact Mountain Mobility at (828) 250-6750, Extension 5.

Other Transit Services

Additional information on Mountain Mobility is available by visiting their website at www.buncombecounty.org/transportation.

The following transportation systems provide connections to ART directly or via Mountain Mobility Trailblazer Routes:

Apple Country Transit
(828) 698-8571
Email: transit@hendersoncounty.org

Haywood Public Transit
Phone (828) 565-0362
Website: www.hay-ride.com

OTHER ASSISTANCE

A free 24-hour information and referral service providing non-emergency information on all health and human services available in Asheville and Buncombe County is available by calling:

2-1-1 or 252-HELP

2-1-1 is a partnership of United Way, Buncombe County and Ingles Markets, Inc.