

# ParaTransit Eligibility Guidelines

## Why Do We Have ParaTransit?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a civil rights bill designed to remove barriers for individuals with a disability. Under the ADA, public transit providers are required to offer a curb-to-curb, demand-responsive ParaTransit service that “MIRRORS” their fixed-route service. This service is for individuals who **do not** have the functional or cognitive capabilities to ride a Westchester County Bee-Line Bus fixed-route bus. Under the ADA ParaTransit is only required to provide service if both the origin and destination are located within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of a regular Bee-Line bus route and only during hours when that regular Bee-Line bus route is in service.

## What Does Bee-Line ParaTransit Do?

ParaTransit is a shared ride public service for people with disabilities that operate within Westchester County.

Eligible riders are required to make an advance reservation at least one (1) to seven (7) days in advance.

ParaTransit service hours are as follows:

- Core Service Hours, Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Saturdays 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Extended services hours, Mondays through Fridays, 7 p.m. to 1:54 a.m., Saturdays from 5:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. to 1:54 a.m. and Sundays from 5:30 a.m. to 1:35 a.m. in certain areas of Westchester County.
- There is **NO** ParaTransit service on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. On major holidays, ParaTransit mirrors the Bee-Line bus schedules.

As ParaTransit mirrors the Bee-Line bus service if a transfer is needed on the fixed route bus to complete a trip, then a ParaTransit rider maybe required to transfer vans at the designated transfer point.

## Who is Eligible to Use Bee-Line ParaTransit?

Under the ADA a person with a disability does not automatically qualify for ParaTransit.

A person must be functionally unable to use the fixed-route regular Bee-Line service. Paratransit service is provided to the following three general groups of persons with disabilities:

- Person(s) having a specific impairment which makes it **impossible** and not just difficult to travel to or from the bus stop.
- Person(s) needing a wheelchair lift-equipped bus but it is not available on the fixed route when they need to travel.
- Person(s) that are unable to board or exit from the regular Bee-Line buses even if they are able to get to a bus stop and the bus is equipped with a wheelchair lift.

## How Can I Apply For Bee-Line ParaTransit?

A prospective applicant may call or write to the Office for People with Disabilities for information and/or to request an application for the Bee-Line ParaTransit service:

Westchester County Office for People with Disabilities  
148 Martine Avenue, Room 102, White Plains NY 10601  
Attn.: ParaTransit  
(914) 995-2959, (914) 995-7397 (TTY)

Upon completion of the application including Part VI (Doctor Certification), you must contact the Office for People with Disabilities at 914-995-2959 to set up an interview if you're 75 years old or younger. ParaTransit will provide a courtesy round trip for your scheduled interview only. Applicants must bring in the completed application and one (1) current 1 ½" x 1 ½" photo. If you should need assistance in completing the application, the person providing assistance should be identified on the application in the designated space.

Please note that incomplete applications will delay the process. If any information is not true or misrepresents the facts, the applicant will be found ineligible.

The application form is available in alternative formats upon request.

The Office for People with Disabilities determines eligibility based principally on the application form and the information submitted. An applicant must establish that he/she is at least twelve (12) years of age and functionally unable to use a regular Bee-Line bus. Additional information, regarding his/her disability and his/her ability to independently use a regular Bee-Line, bus may be requested. Failure to provide any requested information will be conclusively deemed a withdrawal of the Paratransit application.

If assistance is needed you will be allowed to have one (1) personal care attendant (PCA) travel with you at no extra cost. However, this person must board and leave the vehicle at the same time and location as the registered rider and this must be indicated on the application. Any additional riders (i.e. companion) will be required to pay a fare.

## **What Are The Eligibility Categories?**

Conditional – Individuals who are able to use regular Bee-Line bus for some trips, but may require ParaTransit for other trips. Eligibility for ParaTransit trips will be determined on a trip-by-trip basis and will be based on the individual's functional ability to independently use regular Bee-Line bus.

Unconditional – Individuals who are functionally unable to independently use regular Bee-Line bus in any circumstance.

Temporary – Individuals with a short-term disabilities that are unable to use a regular Bee-Line bus independently, either fully or partial. Individuals are granted up to twelve (12) months of service. After the twelve (12) months period, individuals must apply and be evaluated.

If approved for Bee-Line ParaTransit service, the applicant will receive a welcome packet with their ID card and ParaTransit's policies and procedures.

## **If Denied Eligibility, How Can I Appeal?**

If you did not meet the ADA eligibility criteria you will be informed of this decision in writing within twenty-one (21) business days. The letter will explain the reason for denial. You have the right to appeal the denial of eligibility or the level of eligibility granted. Any eligibility related appeals must be requested by contacting the Office for People with Disabilities in writing within sixty (60) days of the denial date to the attention of Mr. Evan Latainer, Director.

Upon receiving your request a letter will be mailed explaining your appeal options, appeal date and appeal time. You will have the choice of an in person appeal or a written appeal. Please provide any additional medical information that may assist you in the appeal process.

An Appeal Committee will review the original decision made by the Office for People with Disabilities and the additional medical information provided by the applicant. The decision made by the Appeal Committee will be communicated in writing within seven (7) business days after the appeal record is complete. If a final decision is not made within seven (7) business days, ParaTransit service will be available until a decision is made.