



## LUZERNE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

### SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION EFFORTS PROGRAM CLIENT SERVICES GUIDE AND POLICIES

THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION EFFORTS PROGRAM (STEP) IS A REDUCED FARE PROGRAM TO ASSIST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN FULFILLING THEIR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.

THIS PROGRAM MEETS REQUIREMENTS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990. STEP IS AVAILABLE IN THE GENERAL SERVICE AREA OF THE LUZERNE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY.

THE PROGRAM PERMITS APPROVED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO RIDE ON VANS OPERATED BY LCTA SHARED RIDE DIVISION.

# LUZERNE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

## SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION EFFORTS PROGRAM CLIENT SERVICES GUIDE AND POLICIES

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### WHAT IS THE STEP PROGRAM?

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The Americans with Disabilities Act requires all public fixed route operations to provide complimentary paratransit service up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the fixed bus route to persons who meet the eligibility guidelines during the same days and hours of operation of the fixed route bus service. This is not a free service and all passengers are required to pay a fare that will not exceed twice the fare of the fixed route system.

STEP is a “Shared Ride” service, meaning you will be sharing your ride with other clients. Pick-Up and Drop-Off Times are within a 30 minute window and you must be ready to depart when the van arrives. All trips must be scheduled prior to the day of service.

#### **Do I have other transportation options besides STEP?**

Yes, you do. If you are able to use public transportation, there are many advantages to taking the bus in and around Luzerne County, including:

**Easy planning:** Transit operates on fixed schedules, so trips can be planned ahead or on the spur of the moment.

**Cost savings:** Transit is a less expensive option. Riders with a disability pay half fare and senior citizen riders (aged 65 and older) are free.

### REMINDERS

- Always be ready within your negotiated pick up window times.
- Please cancel unwanted trips no less than 1 hour prior to your pickup time.
- Follow all LCTA/STEP policies and codes of conduct.
- Refrain from smoking, eating or drinking on the vans. (Eating and drinking may be allowed if medically necessary).
- Keep the entry to your home free of snow, ice and debris.
- Use headphones when listening to radios or audio devices.
- Keep cell phone conversations to a minimum.

Federal law also requires that our public transit systems be accessible to you.

All LCTA buses are equipped with these accessibility features:

- Lifts or ramps for anyone to use
- Accessible stop request devices
- Wheelchair securement spaces
- Public address systems
- Designated priority seating
- Drivers announcing or automated announcement of stops
- Drivers trained for sensitivity

For more information about bus routes, stops, schedules and reduced fares in the LCTA Transportation System, please dial 5-7-0-B-U-S-T-I-M-E or review the current schedules online at [www.lctabus.com](http://www.lctabus.com).

LCTA also offers a service to help you use public transportation by reviewing schedules with you in a one-on-one session and accompany you on a local bus trip to acquaint you with the service and features available. Contact us for more information.

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## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR STEP?

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Eligibility for STEP is based on a person's functional ability to use the public transportation system in and around Luzerne County. This ability level is determined through a transit evaluation by a professional. The evaluation looks at whether the person, without the help of anyone else can:

- Get to and from the bus
- Get on and off an accessible bus
- Understand which bus to get on and when to get off the bus

Eligibility for our services is not based solely on disability, age, or medical diagnosis. Nor is it based on the perceived or real inconvenience of using public transportation, inexperience using the bus, or simply a desire not to use bus service.

As part of the eligibility process first-time applicants may be asked to participate in a physical functional assessment performed by a skilled professional therapist. The functional assessment is used to determine the capacity of a person with a disability to perform those skills and tasks necessary for fixed-route bus travel. The functional assessment performance report along with all available medical documentation and application information are reviewed by an LCTA Eligibility Specialist who will make the eligibility determination. Within

twenty-one days of the completed record, the customer is notified by mail of their eligibility status.

Trip requests will be scheduled for any individual who:

- has a valid LCTA ADA/STEP eligibility number and expiration date
- is an ADA eligible visitor from another region (for a minimum of 21 days without requiring certification by LCTA);
- has submitted a completed application, but has not received determination notification after 21 days of the application being deemed complete by LCTA.

While LCTA will temporarily honor ADA certifications made by another transit system, it retains the right to require certification (or re-certification) of eligibility through the LCTA once 21 days of service have been provided to the visitor.

Once LCTA has determined that you are eligible, your eligibility can be classified in one of three ways:

1. Unconditional – the rider needs paratransit for all trips.
2. Conditional – the rider needs paratransit for some trips but can use fixed route service for other trips.
3. Temporary – eligibility is short-term for the length of time the rider is unable to use fixed route.

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## RECERTIFICATION

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In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, paratransit customers may be required to recertify their paratransit eligibility at regular intervals. Recertification attempts to insure that registered customers continue to meet eligibility criteria, and to determine if or how the customer's transportation needs have changed.

Customers will receive written notification of recertification approximately forty-five days prior to the date their service is due to expire. LCTA may at any time review the eligibility status of a customer. In such cases, LCTA may require that additional or corroborating information be submitted by or on behalf of the customer and/or may require that a functional assessment be performed.

Each customer is responsible for informing LCTA of any change that may affect his/her eligibility status, to include:

- significant improvement or deterioration of mobility skills;
- the presence of a communicable or contagious disease;
- the need to use or discontinuation use of adaptive devices or mobility aids.

Customers must also promptly inform LCTA of any changes to their:

- residential address;
- home or work telephone numbers;
- the name, address or phone number of their designated emergency contact person(s) and, if applicable, of persons designated to act on a customer's behalf.

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## APPEALS

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Individuals who have been notified in writing that eligibility for the LCTA ADA/STEP Program has been denied or conditioned may request an appeal and review of their eligibility determination.

The completed appeal, including the Request for Appeal Form and any supporting documentation (optional) must be returned to LCTA postmarked no more than sixty (60) days from the date of the original determination. The completed Appeal Request is forwarded to the Review Committee no later than the next business day.

The Review Committee, through a Release of Information Consent, will have access to the applicant's entire application for ADA paratransit eligibility. It is the job of the Review Committee to make a recommendation concerning eligibility and to outline their decision as it relates to the eligibility criteria. Their preliminary decision is made within 20 days of the receipt of the appeal.

If the applicant has been deemed anything less than fully eligible by the members of the Review Committee, the applicant is advised of the right to attend an in-person hearing. The applicant and any other persons of his/her choice may attend the meeting to state the case for paratransit eligibility. This is an opportunity to present the case in person. Hearings are scheduled at a mutually acceptable time for the individual requesting the Hearing and The Review Committee at the LCTA administrative offices.

The applicant will be notified of the decision concerning paratransit eligibility no more than ten (10) days from the date of final appeal hearing. The notification of eligibility determination will be provided in writing and will include the specific reason for the decision.

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## SERVICE ANIMALS

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LCTA welcomes Service Animals and Service Animals In-Training. There is no fee for a Service Animal to ride with the client, although the Service Animal must not occupy a seat. Failure to control a Service Animal may result in the Client and the Service Animal being requested to exit the vehicle.

Note: For safety reasons, drivers are not allowed to carry or handle Service Animals.

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## WHEELCHAIR AND SCOOTER REQUIREMENTS

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The Luzerne County Transportation Authority can safely accept most wheelchairs on its buses. Only those wheelchairs with a rider who exceeds the lift specifications or width of the narrowest part of the wheelchair pathway may be denied service. Most manual wheelchairs or popular motorized scooters are considered ADA compliant. Safe operation of a vehicle lift or ramp requires that the exterior dimensions of a mobility device and any attachments should not exceed these capacity constraints. LCTA reserves the right to not transport persons who use wheelchairs or similar mobility devices that exceed these dimensions or weight restrictions, particularly if such devices do not readily fit on a lift or ramp platform or within a designated area inside the vehicle. A home inspection of the customer's oversized mobility device may be conducted if needed.

Wheelchairs and their users shall be secured at all times during boarding, disembarking, and transporting operations.

Clients using wheelchairs or scooters are required to be secured, using a four-point tie down system at all times while riding in the vehicle. Failure to cooperate with safety related policies may result in loss of service. Mobility devices are strongly encouraged to back onto the wheelchair lift as prescribed by the manufacturer, but it is not mandatory to do so.

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## CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITY

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Some clients are mentally or cognitively impaired or have severe memory problems such that they cannot be safely left on their own at either the pick-up point or the drop-off point. It is the responsibility of the client's caregivers or family to clearly identify these clients to LCTA so that we can inform the driver and take appropriate precautions.

However, the driver cannot act as an attendant for these clients. Cognitively impaired clients will be allowed to travel without an attendant only as long as they exhibit safe behavior in the vehicle. An attendant or caregiver must be present at the pick-up point and at the drop-off point for clients who cannot be left alone. If a responsible attendant or caregiver is not present when the driver attempts to pick-up or drop-off these clients, it can seriously disrupt the driver's schedule. If LCTA encounters absences of an attendant or caregiver, service to the client may be suspended and the matter may be reported to an appropriate state, county or local agency.

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## PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS AND COMPANIONS

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A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is defined as someone (employee, family member or friend) designated or employed specifically to assist a client with a sensory, degenerative, physical and/or developmental disability to meet his or her personal needs. A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is clearly meant to be someone whose services are required by the client. It is important to realize that the need for a PCA is not necessarily related to travel with ADA/STEP Paratransit services. A PCA is often needed by individuals with sensory, degenerative, physical and/or developmental disabilities to assist with other activities of daily living, regarding physical challenges they must meet. Individuals may need a PCA for these activities but be fully capable of traveling on the transit vehicle with the assistance already provided by transit personnel. The need for PCA services can be intermittent or occasional and still be authorized. One PCA is authorized without fare; additional travelers are considered companions and must pay the appropriate companion fare. You must tell the reservationist that you are booking the trip with a PCA so that room will be allotted on the vehicle.

A companion is a friend, relative, or other person who is traveling with you, but is not coming along primarily to help you. You must make a reservation for your companion when you make your own reservation. Companions pay the same fare as the client to travel. The number of

companions may be limited based on vehicle capacity and other passengers with booked trips on the vehicle.

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## TRANSPORTING BAGS / PACKAGES

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Each client is allowed up to three packages (plastic grocery or shopping bags). Clients should make other arrangements for bags / packages exceeding three parcels. Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated. Clients may be required to secure their packages at their seats, as storage space on the vehicle is limited. The maximum combined weight of all packages cannot exceed 20 pounds.

Drivers are only allowed to load a maximum of three bags onto the vehicle. They are not required to carry packages to / from the vehicle. We encourage clients to use a safe and efficient means of transporting bags / packages, such as a portable folding two-wheeled shopping cart.

Note: For safety reasons, clients may not transport more bags / packages than they can manage themselves.

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## SERVICE AREA AND TIMES OF OPERATION

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Clients and qualified registrants are not entitled to service outside of the defined service area.

ADA/STEP Paratransit service operates during the same days and hours as LCTA fixed-route bus service. The service area extends  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile beyond and on either side of the fixed route bus service. Points of origin and destinations not within the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor are ineligible for ADA/STEP Paratransit service but may qualify for Shared Ride service in other programs in the LCTA Transportation System.

LCTA is committed to providing trips that are not excessive in time length and have adopted the standard that ADA/STEP trips will be comparable in length and service as to the same trip as if it were provided by the fixed route bus service. The length of time would include the travel time to and from the bus stop, waiting for the bus, and the time taken while riding the bus including transfers if needed.

For more information regarding current fixed route service days and times:

Dial 5-7-0-B-U-S-T-I-M-E, or review the current schedules online at [www.lctabus.com](http://www.lctabus.com).

Schedules and information are also available at:

Wilkes-Barre Intermodal Terminal, South Washington St, Wilkes-Barre

LCTA Shared Ride, 2009 Wyoming Ave, Forty-Fort

LCTA Fixed Route, 315 Northampton St, Kingston

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## TRANSFERS

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LCTA will service ADA/STEP clients directly without transfers for any origin/destination that lies within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the Fixed Route service. For those origins and destinations that extend beyond the service area of LCTA but are within neighboring Transportation Authorities service area will be accommodated by transfer at a designated point. The same days and hours of service and next day reservation availability would still be in effect, although advance notice of such a trip would be appreciated.

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## SCHEDULING

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Please have the following information available when making a reservation:

Client name.

The exact street address for origin and destination.

Names of complexes or subdivisions, building, apartment, or suite numbers.

Easily identified pick-up points should be communicated, where applicable, such as a hospital, shopping mall, or doctor's office.

The appointment or the pick-up time. (Remember to indicate if the customer is traveling with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), companions or a service animal.

The return trip information.

## **Scheduling a Trip**

Clients can request a Pick-Up Time or a Drop-Off Time in order to best serve their needs. If the client needs to arrive at an appointment or employment by a certain time, the reservationist will use the Drop-Off Time as the time to be delivered by. Please notify the reservationist that you need a specific Drop-Off time when reserving your trip. Always factor in some time to make it from the actual drop off to your ultimate destination as your actual Drop-Off Time may be only 5 minutes before your requested Drop-Off Time. Clients can negotiate a Pick-Up Time or Drop-Off Time, but not both.

ADA/STEP Paratransit clients should expect the transit vehicle within 30 minutes of the negotiated “ready time” (15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the negotiated scheduled pick-up time) and must board the vehicle within 5 minutes of arrival. ADA/STEP Paratransit clients can make a reservation for a trip from one to fourteen days in advance.

## **Negotiating a Pick-Up or Drop-Off Time**

Trip “negotiations” are permissible under the ADA. Clients requesting a specific pick-up time that is not available, will be offered a pick-up time nearest to the requested pick-up time within one hour before and one hour after the requested pick-up time. If the client refuses a trip provided within one hour before and one hour after the requested pick-up time, the declined trip will not be considered a trip denial. This negotiation window, however, is subject to the rider’s practical travel needs. The reservationist will endeavor to consider the rider’s time constraints. While some trips have inherent flexibility (e.g., shopping or recreation), other trips have constraints with respect to when they can begin (e.g., not before the end of the individual’s workday or not until after an appointment is over). For example, a rider may end his or her workday at 4 p.m. and request a 4 p.m. pickup. In this example, offering a pickup any time between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. would be appropriate and consistent with the negotiation requirement. The same would hold true for a requested drop off time. A client may still accept an alternate pick-up time that is more than one hour from the requested time. All passengers have the right to reject an alternative trip time. LCTA agents will call, when possible, in cases where the vehicle is delayed 15 minutes or more to inform you of the delay and estimate the time the vehicle will arrive after attempting to dispatch another vehicle. If a client gets a late trip and requires additional time, the client may call to request a later return trip and the trip will not be charged as a no-show.

Please remember that you are responsible for making arrangements for the vehicle to gain access to gated communities or secured complexes. A driver cannot be delayed trying to locate personnel to provide access to a complex. Drivers may not leave the line-of-sight of the vehicle for an extended period of time and may not be able to go into lobbies or waiting rooms to look for clients.

LCTA clients may call at any time to ask for an estimated time of arrival (ETA). To get specific information on when the scheduled vehicle is expected to arrive, call (570) 288-8420.

### **Advanced and Subscription Reservation Service**

Reservations will be accepted as far in advance as fourteen days, but not later than 5:00 PM the day before the ride date. A call placed after hours or on weekends must be left on a voice message for next day service.

Subscription Service is offered to LCTA customers who have travel patterns to and from the same destinations, during the same days and hours, at least one day per week. Individuals who have schedules that change frequently are not eligible for subscription service.

Subscription service is offered Monday through Saturday and is restricted to work, volunteer, medical and educational trips. When a person is approved for subscription service it is necessary for that person to contact the scheduler to confirm the desired days and times of travel. Once a subscription schedule is confirmed by LCTA, the client does not have to make any further reservation calls except to cancel any trip you do not plan to take.

Unfortunately, same day changes cannot be accommodated. Subscription service is offered as a convenience to our clients. Availability is based upon a first come / first serve basis. Subscription service is not required under ADA; therefore, certain restrictions may apply due to capacity constraints.

**Note: Same day reservations cannot be accommodated. LCTA does not operate on Sundays or on nationally observed holidays.**

### **Changing Your Reservation**

Changes to reservations will be accepted not later than one day before the ride date. Requests for changes on the ride date cannot be accommodated. Please do not ask the driver to make changes to your trip, such as dropping you at a different address. Drivers are not authorized to make changes to the trips they are assigned.

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## CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS

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At the time the reservation is made, clients may be notified if excessive demand exists for their particular requested trip time, and an alternative may be negotiated.

Operational problems attributable to causes beyond the control of LCTA shall not be a basis for determining that a pattern or practice of capacity constraints exists. Examples include, but are not limited to, unanticipated delays caused by another client, weather, or traffic conditions affecting all vehicular traffic that were not anticipated at the time a trip was scheduled.

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## CANCELLATIONS, LATENESS AND NO SHOWS

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Clients must cancel unwanted trips at least one hour in advance. A documented pattern of untimely cancellation notice, no shows, or lateness for reasons within the client's control may result in service denial on a long-term basis. (See Policy on Suspension of Service below.)

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## MISSED TRIPS

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A missed trip is when LCTA fails to pick up a customer during the scheduled pickup time window, which is 15 minutes before or after the negotiated pick up time.

Some examples include:

The vehicle arrived more than 15 minutes after the negotiated pick up time

The vehicle arrived more than 15 minutes before the negotiated pick up time and the driver did not wait for the client. (Please note that if the driver is early, the client does not need to go to the vehicle until 15 minutes before the negotiated pick up time.)

The vehicle never arrived;

The driver did not follow the proper procedures to locate the rider;

The vehicle went to the wrong location.

Missed trips are different than no-shows as it was LCTA error that caused the trip not to be completed. These trips must be recorded as unaccommodated (Denial in Ecolane), not as no-shows. Missed trips do not count as no-shows.

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## SERVICE QUALITY

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Schedules are designed to allow adequate time for clients to complete boarding or disembarking from the vehicle. LCTA personnel will provide the assistance necessary to board, disembark, or stow personal belongings and may include assistance to and from the door as needed (case by case basis).

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## AMBULATORY CLIENTS

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Clients unable to use the steps to enter the vehicle may use the lift standing to board the vehicle. Ambulatory clients who use the wheelchair lift must be able to stand without assistance to hold onto the handrails.

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## POLICY ON OPEN SORES AND WOUNDS

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For the purpose of this policy, an open sore or wound includes but is not limited to: a health / medically related opening which creates leaking or discharge of bodily fluid (Dialysis pick-line, colostomy bag, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) or injury that causes an external break in body tissue. Wounds include abrasions, incisions, lacerations, punctures and avulsions.

Wounds must be properly dressed and leakage / discharge must be controlled to prevent the threat of transmission of bio-hazards to transit personnel and other clients and prevent infection of the wound. Transit personnel may ask clients if leakage / discharge or dressings are properly controlled / applied.

In some cases, clients may be required to exit the vehicle to address bio-hazard concerns.

Note: LCTA personnel cannot be held responsible for dressing wounds and controlling bodily fluid leakage / discharge. This is the client's responsibility. Any client requiring assistance in properly dressing wounds and controlling bodily fluid leakage / discharge while on the vehicle will be strongly encouraged to travel with a PCA. Should dressing wounds and controlling bodily fluid leakage / discharge become necessary while on the vehicle, LCTA personnel will contact emergency medical services (911) to administer the required aide at the client's expense.

Repeated incidents related to improperly dressed / undressed wounds and uncontrolled bodily fluid leakage / discharge which disrupt or delay other LCTA clients and place them at risk of transmission of infectious agents may result in the evaluation of the individual's suitability to use LCTA services.

## **Medication and Transporting Other Life-support Equipment**

Clients may travel with respirators, portable oxygen, and some other life-support equipment, provided such transport does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials.

Clients using such equipment are strongly advised to use medical transportation and/or travel with a personal care attendant and may not be allowed to carry additional oxygen tanks if transported in an unsafe manner. Clients requiring medication or oxygen at regular intervals should be advised that travel time on transit vehicles is not exact. Rides are subject to delays that may result in a client's on-board time being longer than 60 minutes. Public transportation is subject to unpredictable conditions such as traffic delays and mechanical problems.

Note: LCTA personnel cannot be held responsible for the administration of medications. The administration of medication when in a LCTA vehicle is the client's responsibility. Any client requiring assistance in the administration of medication or oxygen while on the vehicle should travel with a PCA as LCTA personnel will not provide this assistance. If administration of medications or oxygen becomes necessary while on the vehicle, LCTA personnel will contact emergency medical services (911) to administer the required medication at the client's expense. Repeated incidents in which the administration of medication and/or oxygen disrupt or delay other LCTA clients may result in the evaluation of the individual's suitability to use LCTA services.

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## ACCESSIBLE ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS

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Service to or from inaccessible origins or destinations will be provided at the nearest curb or location where safe access exists. In this instance a personal care attendant is strongly advised if additional assistance is needed.

In order for us to provide you with safe, on-time service you must specifically designate a location and inform us where you will be waiting for your pick-up.

LCTA has developed the following procedures to ensure safe vehicle movement and standardized connecting point guidelines:

Clients living in large, multiple unit apartment complexes must meet the vehicle either at the curb closest to their unit address or at the curb closest to the main lobby or centralized building, unless instructed otherwise.

If the apartment complex is inaccessible to LCTA vehicles, the client must meet the vehicle at the main entrance to the complex. Before any LCTA vehicle can enter apartment complexes that are not easily accessible, the location must be inspected by a supervisor or senior transit personnel. If the facility has a guarded gate or limited access, the client should inform the security staff of the scheduled pick-up and return times. It is the client's responsibility to notify LCTA of security procedures or access codes when the reservation is made and to arrange access for the vehicle. LCTA vehicles cannot be delayed due to complicated access requirements.

A client traveling from a large office complex, medical facility, or other similar area must meet the vehicle at the curb closest to the main reception desk or main lobby entrance. LCTA is committed to arriving within its pick-up / ready window. If the client is not at the proper pick-up location within the designated pick-up / ready window and the five-minute grace period has expired, the vehicle will depart and the client will be declared a no-show.

Out of courtesy for other clients who are scheduled on the same vehicle and other client's pick up and drop off schedules that need to be met, the driver will wait no longer than a five-minute grace period. Clients must be ready to depart at any time during the pick-up / ready window described when reservations are made.

Please note that for your and other client's convenience the LCTA vehicles cannot wait while clients conduct business at their destination.

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## ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT LCTA SERVICES

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This information will be made available in accessible formats and alternative languages as necessary to enable users to understand and communicate LCTA's services and policies. Applicable policies will be reviewed by reservation agents when reservations are made. Please let the reservation agent or customer service representative know that you are requesting an alternative format.

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## POLICY ON PROHIBITING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

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Service will immediately be denied on a long-term basis to clients who engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal behavior.

Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: threats or fear of physical or verbal abuse; unlawful harassment, including unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations; unauthorized use of equipment on the vehicle; voluntarily and repeatedly violating vehicle riding rules, including smoking, not wearing a seatbelt, standing while it is in motion, eating or drinking, or defacing equipment; refusing to comply with other requirements specified in the policies above; or providing false information in order to qualify for ADA certification.

Using any LCTA services while under the influence of or the use or consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or drugs is prohibited at all times.

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## POLICY ON SUSPENSION OF SERVICE

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Clients must not engage in activities which misuse the system, unnecessarily using capacity that could otherwise go to clients who need transportation, and increase LCTA's service costs.

Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to, failing to show up for scheduled rides ("no shows"), failing to board the vehicle immediately upon arrival (lateness), and providing late cancellation notice.

A suspension may be imposed as described below for a documented pattern within any 30-day period of misuse of system capacity within the client's control. A documented pattern is based on a percentage of 50% or more of trips untimely cancelled, no showed or late when there are 10 or more trips scheduled in a rolling 30 day period. A sudden personal emergency, sudden or worsening illness, inability to contact LCTA for a legitimate reason, or a late driver are not considered within the client's control.

Clients will be provided an opportunity to explain the reason for each occurrence in a call or letter initiated by LCTA. After the third incident (and if the client cannot be reached after three attempts via telephone or postcard), LCTA will issue a written warning notice that the next violation will result in a denial of service.

Prior to any suspension, a written warning of the proposed suspension period and the reason(s) for it will be provided to the client. Clients who appeal the proposed suspension may continue to ride pending a decision on the appeal. (See Policy on Appeals above.)

Suspension for Untimely Cancellation Notice, No Shows, and Lateness:

First Suspension:	7 days
Second Suspension:	14 days
Third (and subsequent) Suspensions:	30 days

Trip denials or suspension from service are appealed directly with LCTA. All appeals must be filed within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of the service denial notification letter. Final decisions on appeals will be made by LCTA Management.

Written appeals must be directed to the following address:

Luzerne County Transportation Authority

Director of Administrative Services

315 Northampton St

Kingston, PA 18704

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## POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATION AND ADA NOTICE

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The Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in access to its services, programs or activities. It is LCTA's policy to meet or exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) to enable people with disabilities to have full and equal access to services.

To ensure that this goal is met, upon request, reasonable modification of policies will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in programs and services provided by LCTA.

### **Title VI "Statement of Policy"**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides 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 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

The Luzerne County Transportation Authority is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B. This plan was developed to guide the LCTA in its administration and management of Title VI-related activities.

Additional information concerning LCTA's Title VI obligations and complaint procedure can be obtained online at [www.lctabus.com](http://www.lctabus.com), or by calling 570-288-9356.

### **Limited English Proficiency Policy Statement and Available Resources**

LCTA provides several options to assist in communication with individuals who do not speak English. LCTA contracts with Interpreters Unlimited, LLC. to provide translation services. Customers should identify their need for translation services upon calling the LCTA Shared Ride Office, and LCTA will conference call in an interpreter. Upon request, all documents can be provided in an alternative language. However, final application materials must be provided from the customer to LCTA in English.

For individuals that are hearing or sight impaired due to a disability, LCTA encourages customers contact us at 1-800-654-5984 (TDD), or to use the PA Relay Service. The PA Relay Service can be accessed by calling 711. Per ADA regulations, upon request, all documents will be provided in an alternative format to consumers upon request.

All translation and interpretation services, and alternative formats are provided free of charge.

### **Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities Policy**

If you have a disability and believe you may need an accommodation to fully and equally participate in a particular LCTA service, facility, employment, program, public meeting or activity, you may request an accommodation.

Accommodation requests are granted to any qualified person with a disability for whom an accommodation is reasonable and necessary under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). A request will be granted unless it would:

- Be an undue financial or administrative burden
- Fundamentally alter LCTA operations, or
- Threaten someone's safety or well-being.

You may be required to provide additional information to properly evaluate your reasonable accommodation request. If medical and other health information is requested, it will be sealed per HIPAA regulations. Generally, ten business day advance notice is required to review reasonable accommodation requests. However, a response to an immediate need for accommodation will be provided to the fullest extent possible.

LCTA will also ensure effective communication, including the provision of necessary auxiliary aids and services, so that people with disabilities can participate in the transportation services that link them to the community, opportunity and independence.

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## SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS & COMPLAINTS

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LCTA seeks to provide its clients with safe, reliable, and customer-friendly service. We look forward to working with you to provide the best service possible. If you have a suggestion, comment or a complaint about our services, please call our Complaint Line Monitor at (570) 283-1683.

Specific details will help us thoroughly address your suggestions, comments or complaints in an expeditious fashion.

Please remember to include the following information when calling:

Name, address, and telephone number

Location, Day and time of experience, if applicable

Vehicle number and/or driver's name / description, if applicable

Dispatch / reservation agent's name, if concerning a telephone conversation

Explanation of incident, suggestion, or comment.

Complaints received by LCTA will be logged and numbered. They will be processed and forwarded to the appropriate authorities for investigation. If the supervisor or other support staff is not available, the call will go to voice mail and a response will be provided by the next business day. Complaints received by letter will be dated and answered in seven (7) working days. If the appropriate information is provided, the investigation will be completed within seven (7) working days (excluding Saturday, Sundays and holidays) and the client will be contacted by telephone and/or letter advising you of the finding of the complaint.

If the investigation cannot be completed within seven (7) working days, the client will be notified of the delay and advised when to expect a follow-up call to address their concern.