

**BeST Transit** operates in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The procedures and regulations in this brochure have been established to assure that ADA eligible passengers are afforded accessible, reliable paratransit service.

### **1. Eligibility**

BEST TRANSIT provides complementary paratransit services for individuals with disabilities that prevent them from using the fixed route buses. Disabled riders are eligible for BEST TRANSIT ADA service if their disability makes it impossible to board buses or to navigate through the bus system because of a physical or mental impairment. Additionally, those with a specific disability related condition which interacts with architectural or environmental barriers to prevent travel to and from bus stops may also be eligible. The impairment must make it impossible to use buses, rather than more difficult than for those without the impairment.

In order to use this service, individuals must first be certified as “ADA eligible clients” by the certification process. Use of BEST TRANSIT may be approved only for certain trips, depending on the conditions under which disabled applicants can use buses. If eligibility is approved for certain trips only, applicants will be notified of the limitations on the use of BEST TRANSIT upon approval.

### **2. Certification Process**

Individuals must be certified as ADA eligible before they can utilize BEST TRANSIT paratransit service. Applications are available from BEST TRANSIT and various agencies. It is important to understand that certification of eligibility for this service rests upon a functional evaluation of clients’ impairments which prevent them from using the regular transit system rather than a medical diagnosis of the underlying condition. BeST TRANSIT’s process for

determining ADA eligibility will generally rely on self-certification of a person’s functional disabilities, supplemented by additional documentation only as required to effectively evaluate and classify a specific impairment. In some cases, BEST TRANSIT will need to contact the applicant or an appropriate agency or other sources to verify or expand upon the information provided if a particular claim appears to be less than fully supported by the information provided in the application. BEST TRANSIT will make the determination of whether or not the applicant is authorized to utilize BEST TRANSIT as an ADA eligible client and will notify individuals in writing as to this determination within twenty-one (21) days of the submission of a properly completed application. If a determination on eligibility is not made within twenty-one (21) days from the date of application, the applicant may use BeST TRANSIT ADA service until such a determination is completed.

If the determination is that the individual is ineligible for BEST TRANSIT paratransit service, BEST TRANSIT will state the reasons for this decision. In such cases, applicants will have the right to appeal this decision.

### **3. Appeals Process**

The appeals process is available to any individual who has been denied eligibility for BEST TRANSIT paratransit service. Eligible clients who have had limitations placed on the trips they can make with BEST TRANSIT or whose eligibility has been suspended for missing more than three (3) reserved trips in a six-month period can also use this appeals process. A written appeal must be received by BEST TRANSIT’s Special Services Manager within sixty (60) days of the date of such written notice.

### **4. Service Area**

BEST TRANSIT paratransit service will be available for all trip requests with origin and

destination within a service area defined around the route network used by the fixed route bus system. Basically, this service area is defined by three-quarters of a mile from any of BEST TRANSIT’s bus routes and within the municipalities participating in BEST TRANSIT’s fixed route system

### **5. Hours and Dates of Service**

BEST TRANSIT paratransit service will be available from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Monday through Friday. No service will be provided on New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, or Christmas Day.

### **6. Advanced Reservation Requirements**

An advance reservation is required for each one-way trip on BEST TRANSIT, including return trips and any stops you intend to make along the way. Advance reservations may be made fourteen (14) days prior to the day of travel, but not later than 5 p.m. the day prior to travel. To make a reservation, you must call BEST TRANSIT’s reservation department at (800) 242-3484 between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM, Next day service will be provided if the trip is requested between hours above the day before the trip is to be scheduled. If you are unable to make a trip at a time previously reserved, you should follow the procedures under CHANGES, CANCELLATIONS, AND DELAYS.

### **7. Scheduling**

Trips are grouped into shared rides on BEST TRANSIT vehicles. Thus, your pick-up time may be scheduled within one hour of the requested time, taking your scheduled activity into account when necessary. You will be notified of the scheduled pick-up time when you make your reservation.

You will be picked up within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled time. Please be ready to board the vehicle when it arrives. If possible, you

should give the dispatcher a telephone number where you can be notified of any unforeseen delays in meeting your scheduled pick-up. Please be prepared for delays in your pick-up time or the need for additional travel time during snow storms or other unusual conditions.

### **8. Changes, Cancellations, and Delays**

Once a reservation is made, you are expected to travel to and from the points and at the times scheduled. BEST TRANSIT vehicles will only wait five (5) minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time or the time the vehicle arrives, whichever is later. This regulation is enforced to protect other passengers from unnecessary delays.

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE DELAYED, you must contact BEST TRANSIT at least one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time. The dispatcher will arrange a new pick-up at the next available time. Such re-scheduling may delay your pickup significantly, depending on the number of other trips already scheduled for the day, but you are guaranteed that you will be picked up as soon as possible.

IF YOU WANT TO CANCEL a reserved trip, you must notify BEST TRANSIT at least one (1) hour prior to your scheduled pick-up time.

If you do not contact BEST TRANSIT about the delay or cancelation, and the vehicle leaves after the five (5) minute waiting period, you will be considered a “NO-SHOW,” and your ride will be canceled. BEST TRANSIT does not guarantee that “NO-SHOWS” will be rescheduled.

### **9. “No Show” Policy**

BEST TRANSIT understands that because riders require trips to be scheduled in advance, riders may sometimes miss scheduled rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. BEST TRANSIT also understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely way for reasons that are beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled

trips [or failing to cancel trips in a timely way] can lead to suspension of service.

The Point Scale and Corresponding Actions are:

1. 1 accumulated penalty point per year - First Warning Letter
2. 2 points per year – Second Warning Letter
3. 3 points per year - Third Letter and Possible Loss of Standing Order

#### 10. Vehicles

Because of the need to provide transportation to many passengers with a limited number of vehicles, it is not possible to honor requests for specific vehicles, unless you have physical limitations which require it. Please inform the dispatcher of any such requirements such as a lift-equipped van.

#### 11. Fares

Fares are required for each trip on BEST TRANSIT. Each stop that you make is counted as one trip. The fare for eligible ADA clients is twice the BEST TRANSIT base fare. Clients will pay the fare to the driver of the van at the time the trip is made. Drivers do not make change. On trips made by eligible ADA clients who are authorized to be accompanied by a personal care attendant, no fare will be charged for the personal care attendant.

#### 12. Personal Care Attendants and Traveling Companions

Disabled passengers who require a personal care attendant on each trip to board or ride

BEST TRANSIT vehicles must request approval to do so when applying for the program (See Certification Process). If approved, the personal care attendant must accompany the passenger on every trip. No fare will be charged to authorize personal care attendants.

In addition, ADA clients may be accompanied by one traveling companion other than the personal care attendant, as long as the companion has the same origin and destination as the ADA eligible client. In these instances, the companion will be charged the basic deviation fare for each one-way trip (twice the fixed-route fare). If you plan to have a traveling companion, you must notify a BEST TRANSIT dispatcher when scheduling your trip. If no reservation

is made for the companion, service will not be provided.

It is important to note that BEST TRANSIT service will provide “door-to-door” service. This means that while drivers will be able to help clients board and disembark from the vehicle, they cannot be responsible for escorting passengers to their destination.

Passengers must be physically and medically able to travel. BEST TRANSIT is not designed as an ambulance for paramedical service, or to handle medical emergencies. Drivers are not trained to assist passengers in such cases. BEST TRANSIT reserves the right to refuse to transport a passenger whose overall physical condition makes travel aboard BEST TRANSIT vehicles unsafe.

#### 13. Excessive travel times:

BeST Transit determines that excessive travel times for ADA Paratransit trips will be any trip that is the length of time it would take for that person to use the fixed route (including from their home to the bus stop, transfer time, and ride time) plus 20 minutes. BeST Transit management will perform semi-annual audit reviews of random trips to ensure compliance with this standard. If a customer feels that a trip was excessively long, the can report the problem by calling BeST at 570-888-7330 or by completing a Passenger Ride Time Report Form.

#### 14. Special Consideration for Those Using Wheelchairs

Safety concerns require that wheelchairs not be altered through the removal of structural equipment such as footrest or armrest, except where authorized in writing by a physician and with the prior approval of BEST TRANSIT. Wheelchairs must be structurally sound and in good working condition.

BEST TRANSIT reserves the right to refuse transportation to passengers whose wheelchairs have loose or worn parts or whose wheelchairs have had equipment removed or altered in such a way that wheelchair stability or operation is affected.

#### 15. Visitors

Visitors showing documentation from another transit authority certifying their eligibility for paratransit under the Americans with Disabilities Act may use BEST TRANSIT ADA service by showing such documentation. Visitors without such documentation must notify BEST TRANSIT of their disability and residence to receive approval to use BEST TRANSIT.

Visitors are only eligible for BEST TRANSIT for a period of twenty-one (21) calendar days from the first date that the service is used; after twenty-one (21) days, service will be denied until and unless the visitor completes the application procedure and is determined to be eligible for paratransit. If a visitor plans to use BEST TRANSIT paratransit service in excess of twenty-one (21) days in a one-year period, it will be required that he or she apply for eligibility locally.

Persons with disabilities visiting Bradford, Sullivan & Tioga counties should contact BEST TRANSIT for information on using BEST TRANSIT during their stay here.

#### 16. Other Programs of Interest to BeST Transit Patrons

Senior Shared Ride Program: Eligible consumers who are 65 or older and are residents of Bradford, Sullivan and Tioga counties can register for this service.

Medical Assistance Transportation Program: Is a program for eligible consumers who have active MA through the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare.

Persons with Disabilities: For residents who are between the ages of 18-65 years of age and have certificate of disability may be eligible.

#### 17. Additional Information

Additional information is available upon request by calling BeST Transit’s Customer Service Department at (800) 242-3484 or write: 27824 Route 220, Athens, Pa. 18810

Complete policies can be found at

[www.GoBeSTTransit.com](http://www.GoBeSTTransit.com) *Revised 11/2017*



## BeST TRANSIT ADA Complementary Paratransit Program

### INFORMATION GUIDE

For more information call  
BeST Transit at (800) 242-3484

BeST Transit  
27824 Route 220  
Athens, Pa. 18810  
[www.GoBeSTTransit.com](http://www.GoBeSTTransit.com)