



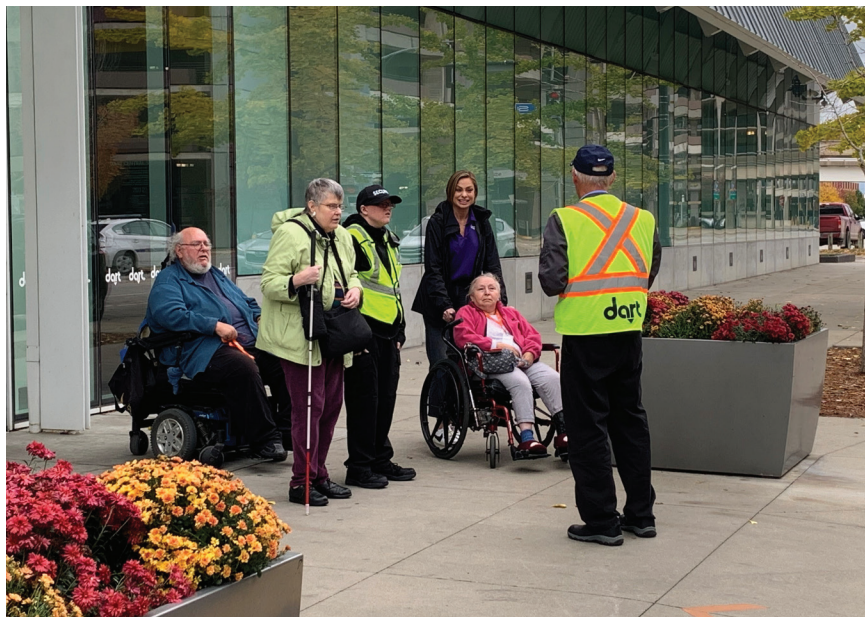
BUS PLUS RIDER GUIDE

**DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
620 CHERRY STREET, DES MOINES, IA 50309**

UPDATED 2025

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BUS PLUS PARATRANSIT SERVICE

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) provides paratransit to people who are unable to fully access DART's fixed-route bus system. DART's paratransit program, called Bus Plus, provides door-to-door transportation service and is aligned with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Bus Plus service is for customers who have a disability that prevents them from using DART's fixed-route bus service all or some of the time. Prior to using Bus Plus, customers must go through the eligibility process described in this guide.

BUS PLUS PHONE NUMBER

To schedule rides, check on the status of a ride, cancel a ride, check on the status of your eligibility application or for general service information, call Customer Service: **515-283-8136**.

For more information, visit rideDART.com/paratransit or scan the QR code.

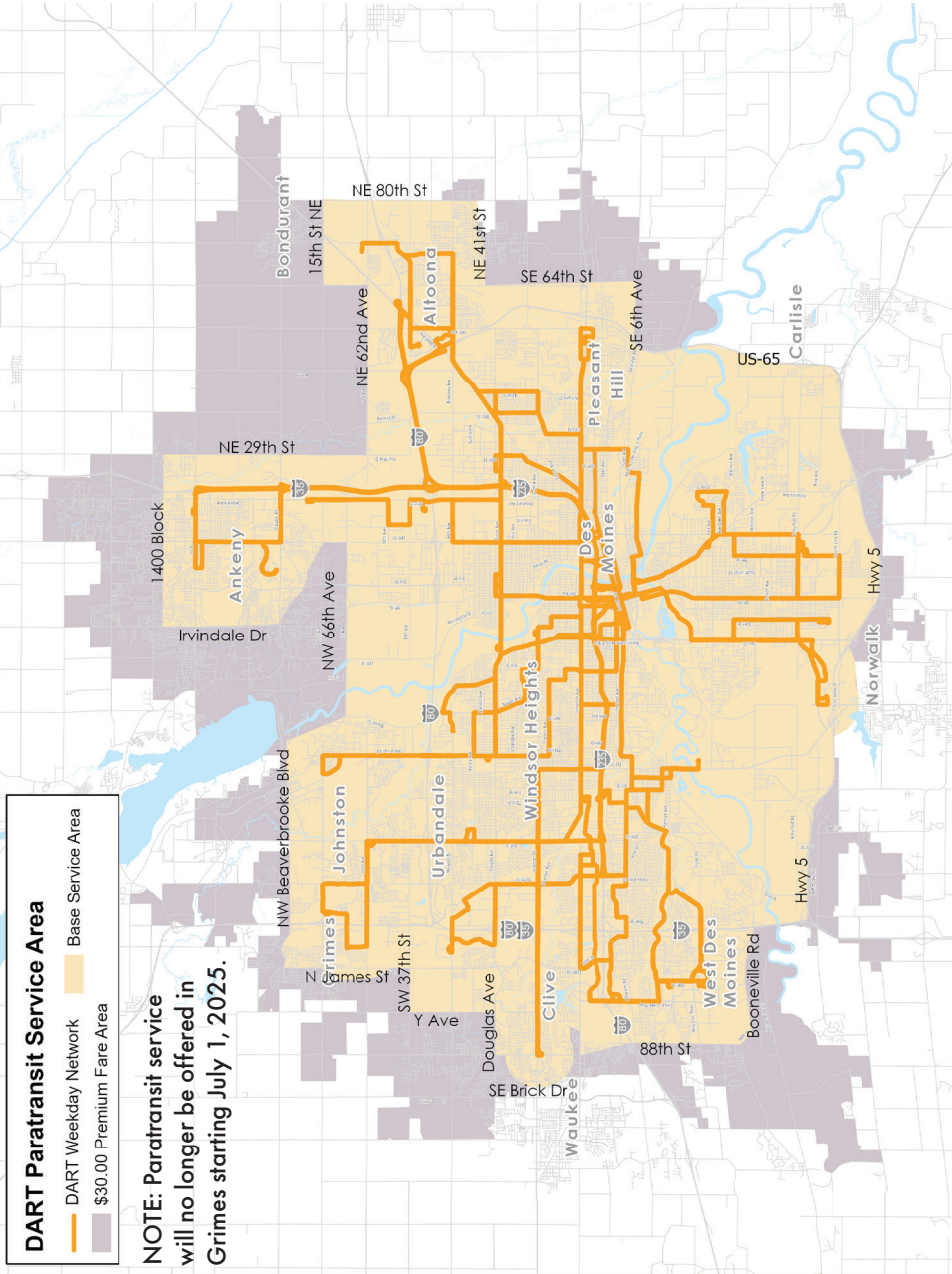




WHERE AND WHEN BUS PLUS PROVIDES PARATRANSIT

DART's Bus Plus paratransit service operates in a comparable service area and during the same hours as DART's fixed-route bus service. Customers can call DART's Customer Service to see if a specific trip is eligible.

- **DART Service Area:** The Bus Plus paratransit service area includes a minimum of a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile zone in and around DART's fixed-route service. The map is included in this guide for reference but may change as fixed-route bus service is adjusted. Visit the DART website or contact Customer Service for the latest map.
- **DART Service Hours:** Bus Plus service is generally available 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays, which complements fixed-route bus service. Actual times may vary depending on your trip locations. Additionally, holiday hours may apply.
- Bus Plus users are not required to live within the service area boundaries to qualify for the service. However, the pick-up and drop-off addresses must be in the service area.
- Trips booked under this service require scheduling at least one day in advance.



ELIGIBILITY PROCESS

Bus Plus is DART's ADA door-to-door paratransit service for riders with a disability that prevents the use of DART's fixed-route service all or part of the time. Riders must apply to use this service. To start the eligibility process, an individual must fill out a DART Bus Plus Service Eligibility Form. The form is available for download on the DART website or a paper copy can be requested by calling Customer Service. DART requires that the applicant include the DART Professional Verification Form in order to evaluate eligibility for the service. This form must be completed by a professional as listed on the eligibility application. DART will review completed applications and mail the eligibility determination within 21 calendar days. Customers will need to recertify every three years or when there is a change to their mobility or mobility device.

ELIGIBILITY: DIFFERENT TYPES

Types of Bus Plus Program Eligibility

Based on an assessment of an individual's needs and circumstances, applicants may qualify for any one of the following types of eligibility:

- **Unconditional Eligibility** – Full access to the service for up to three years.
- **Temporary Eligibility** – Full or conditional access to the service for a certain amount of time, usually the expected time of the temporary disability.
- **Conditional Eligibility** – Access to the service for up to three years only when conditions exist that affect a person's ability to use the fixed-route service determined during the eligibility process. Conditional eligibility may be approved based on some of, but not limited to, the following situations: weather conditions, specific origins or destinations, time of day, etc.
- **Denial/Not Eligible** – Bus Plus service is not available to individuals whose disability is not at a degree that prohibits travel on DART's fixed-route bus system.

BUS PLUS CERTIFICATION PERIOD

Individuals may be certified for Bus Plus service for a maximum period not to exceed three years. An individual's certification eligibility period depends on the individual's disability or health condition.

BUS PLUS RECERTIFICATION

In compliance with the ADA, DART requires Bus Plus paratransit customers to periodically recertify. Although an individual's disability may be permanent, other factors that impact the determination of eligibility may change over time.

Bus Plus customers are required to apply for recertification 60 days prior to the expiration of their current eligibility period. A recertification application will be mailed to each Bus Plus customer before the eligibility certification expiration date.

FIXED-ROUTE FREE FARE

Bus Plus customers can ride any local and express DART bus for free when they show their Bus Plus ID card, which must be obtained by contacting DART Customer Service. Learn more about fixed-route service and plan your trip by visiting **rideDART.com** or call DART Customer Service at **515-283-8136** for more information.

BUS PLUS PREMIUM SERVICE ZONE

A Premium Service Zone is available to approved Bus Plus customers. The expanded service area, shown on page five, offers travel to and from locations in DART member communities beyond the existing paratransit service area at a premium fare of \$30 per trip.

Trips in the Premium Service Zone are for Bus Plus-approved customers only and the \$30 fee applies to all customers. Customers booking travel within the Bus Plus Premium Service Zone must reserve their trip at least 48 hours in advance to ensure that there is available capacity for their trip reservation.



HOW TO RIDE DART'S BUS PLUS

As previously noted, customers must have approved eligibility prior to scheduling the paratransit service. The following section describes steps of how to ride the service.

Making a Reservation

Reservations must be made at least one day prior to the trip and up to seven days in advance by calling DART Customer Service at **515-283-8136**. Bus Plus Premium Service Zone reservations must be made at least two days prior to the trip or up to five days in advance. Though the paratransit service operates within the same hours as the fixed-route bus service, reservations must be made Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Offices are closed and DART does not provide Bus Plus service on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Next day reservations made on Sunday for travel on Monday must be made by leaving a voicemail with DART Dispatch at **515-283-8136** between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. DART staff will return your call to schedule a trip.



RESERVATION CHECKLIST FOR SCHEDULED SERVICE

Please have the following information ready when making a reservation:

- ☐ First and last name.
- ☐ Date and time you wish to travel. Also include the appointment time at your destination, if available.
- ☐ Complete address of your pick-up location.
- ☐ Complete address of your destination. Also include the name of the business, the suite or building number, etc.
- ☐ Time of your return trip. Please allow at least 90 minutes between trips.
- ☐ Are you traveling with a Personal Care Attendant and/or a guest?
- ☐ Funding source, such as Medicaid information, Unlimited Access Partner company, Polk County, if applicable.
- ☐ Any special instructions or additional information.

PLEASE NOTE: Customer Service may need to offer a time up to one hour before or after your requested time based on service demand.

Personal Care Attendant

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) may assist a Bus Plus passenger with personal needs that the eligible rider is unable to achieve independently due to a disability. Bus Plus riders can have a registered PCA accompany them on any trip. The PCA must be picked up and dropped off at the same location as the rider. A Bus Plus rider's PCA rides for free.

Guest (or Companion)

Adults or children are welcome to ride with an ADA eligible Bus Plus customer if there is space available on the vehicle when booking their reservation. Companions must travel the entire trip and pay the same fare as the eligible paratransit customer.

Traveling With Service Animals and Pets

Service animals may accompany customers on paratransit trips. Handlers may be asked two questions: (1) Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform? Pets, emotional support animals or comfort animals are not allowed on paratransit trips. DART and its service partners, Yellow Cab Company and UZURV, reserve the right to refuse entry of an animal if it is not a service animal, the animal cannot be controlled by the handler or the animal is not housebroken.

Taking Your Trip

Customers must be ready and watch for their pick-up vehicle during their scheduled 30-minute pick-up window provided when making their reservation. Drivers have a schedule to keep, so they will wait a maximum of five minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. In the event the driver arrives before your scheduled pick-up window, the driver will be required to wait for the pick-up window to open plus five minutes. A second vehicle will not be sent. Most trips are made using DART vehicles; however during busy times, a customer may be assigned a ride to DART's taxi service partner, Yellow Cab Company, or a regular passenger vehicle marked with both a DART logo and a UZURV logo. The fare is the same for any of these vehicles. Customers needing an accessible vehicle will be assigned to a DART vehicle.



Paying Your Fare

Most customers will pay a \$3.50 fare per trip, unless otherwise confirmed when making a reservation. Please be prepared to pay the fare when boarding the vehicle. Please note that Bus Plus vehicle operators do not make change and any over payment will not be refunded or credited for future trips.

Accepted forms of payment include:

- All customers can pay by cash using the exact fare at the time of service.
- Customers may also use a credit or debit card through the MyDART app. The app must have the Paratransit payment option activated for first-time use. Call DART Customer Service for assistance: **515-283-8100**.

Winter Weather Operations

During harsh winter conditions, paratransit service will operate any time the DART fixed-route bus service operates. However, because paratransit operates on side streets that may not be cleared of snow, staff may need to notify customers if a pick-up vehicle is unable to get to them or will be significantly delayed. Drivers will assist customers when the walks are cleared of snow and ice. A customer is responsible for having their walkway cleared.

Driver Assistance

Driver assistance is available. The following rules apply to this assistance:

- Assistance will be provided from the door of the house or building to the pick-up vehicle and back.
- Assistance is to the first door only. Drivers are not permitted to lose sight of their vehicle or walk up or down any stairs besides those on the vehicle due to safety reasons.
- The Bus Plus driver will not be able to help passengers with non-transportation requests such as helping put on a coat or locking a door.
- Driver assistance with a mobility device on steps is not guaranteed and will be limited to a maximum of two steps. This service is based on the size of the passenger, the height of the step and the driver's ability.
- Packages or bags should be limited to what a customer can carry on board in one boarding trip and can keep in control while the vehicle is in motion. Bags or packages should not block the bus aisle or interfere with other customers or the driver. Drivers are not required to assist customers with packages or shopping carts.
- When a family member or other individual is available, they will be expected to assist rather than the driver.

Reasonable Modification

DART follows all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including amendments to clarify existing rules under 49 CFR Part 27 and 37 implemented on July 13, 2015. Per the new guidelines, DART has established procedures for considering reasonable modifications to DART policies and practices. For more information on this policy or to make a request, visit **rideDART.com/Paratransit** or contact Customer Service.



TRANSPORTATION TIPS

Be Ready Early

Please be ready at least 15 minutes BEFORE your pick-up time. Pick-up vehicles run on flexible schedules and may arrive “early” to pick you up. The bus or other vehicle will wait only five minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

Access to Vehicles Using Wheelchair Lift/Ramp

Bus Plus service shall permit individuals using a cane, crutch, walker or other assistive devices to use the vehicle’s wheelchair lift/ramp to enter the vehicle.

Time Sensitive Medical Needs

If you require food, medication or oxygen at regular intervals, be advised that travel times could last one hour or longer. Please plan ahead and carry appropriate supplies with you when you travel. The operator will assist you in securing medical equipment on the vehicle.

Trip Cancellation

Sometimes plans change and you may need to cancel your trip. If so, trips can be cancelled by calling 515-283-8136. Please cancel your trip at least one hour before your scheduled pick-up time.

Bus Plus Vehicles

DART’s Bus Plus program uses several types of vehicles to transport you. Your trip may be assigned to a partner of DART, such as a taxi vehicle or a passenger vehicle marked with both DART and UZURV logos.



BUS PLUS USERS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Cancellations and No Shows

A **No Show** occurs when a passenger misses a scheduled trip when the vehicle is at the pick-up location within the negotiated pick-up window. If a passenger No Shows or Late Cancels the first leg of a trip, the return trip will remain an “active” trip. If the passenger will not take that trip, they must call DART Customer Service to cancel the trip.

A **Late Cancellation** occurs when a passenger cancels a scheduled trip with less than one hour notice to Customer Service before the start of the negotiated pick-up window. A Late Cancel is equal to a No Show and will be treated the same for service suspension review.

Any passenger that incurs one or more No Shows and/or Late Cancels within a calendar month may be subject to a review of their trips to determine if a pattern or practice of missed trips exists.

When DART performs a review, below is the criteria for determining the number of No Show and/or Late Cancel trips that may result in a penalty:

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING A PENALTY FOR NO SHOW AND/OR LATE CANCEL TRIPS

TRIPS PER MONTH	MAXIMUM NO SHOW/ LATE CANCELS
1 to 14 trips	3
15 to 29 trips	6
30 to 39 trips	8
40 to 50 trips	10
51+ trips	12

Following a review, the passenger will be notified of the number of No Show or Late Cancel trips they incurred in the previous month. No Shows that occur due to circumstances that are beyond the passenger’s control or when the operator arrives after the scheduled window will not be counted. Passengers have the right to contest any No Show or Late Cancel trip. Passengers may contact DART by telephone or mail to contest a trip record. For the complete Bus Plus Paratransit Service Policy, scan the QR Code, visit **rideDART.com/Paratransit** or contact Customer Service.

To appeal any specific No Show trip, passengers may contact DART Customer Service by telephone at **515-283-8100** and leave a customer comment requesting a review. Passengers will be asked for the details of the incident and DART staff will contact the passenger within two business days. The appeal will be resolved by the conclusion of the fifth business day and communicated to the passenger via phone call.

Fare Evasion

Customers who demonstrate a pattern or practice of not paying the fare will be subject to service suspension. Customers must have the exact fare when boarding the vehicle for each leg of their trip. Customers may risk not being able to board the vehicle when the fare is not paid and could be suspended from service.

Rider Code of Conduct

To maintain public transportation services that are orderly, safe, secure, comfortable and convenient, DART adopted “Rules of Conduct” for transit vehicles, facilities and properties. The key rules are:

- No smoking
- No alcohol
- No littering
- No loud music or sounds
- No spitting
- No aggressive or harassing behavior
- No loitering, sitting or lying on floors, or sleeping or camping
- No use of property without wearing shirt and shoes
- Pets (other than service animals) are not allowed on DART vehicles
- No forcing drivers to go to an address not part of the reservation
- Facility and buses are tobacco-free
- Facility and buses are under surveillance at all times

For the complete Code of Conduct, scan the QR Code, visit **rideDART.com** or contact Customer Service.



Visitors to Des Moines

Visitors with disabilities who cannot use the regular fixed-route system are eligible to utilize DART’s Bus Plus paratransit service. The visitor may be asked to provide to DART certain documentation to verify eligibility, nature of their disability and/or residence. If the visitor has been certified as “ADA paratransit eligible” by another public transit provider, DART paratransit will honor the approval and will provide up to 21 days of visitor ADA paratransit service during a 365-day period. If a visitor has not been certified as eligible by another public entity but claims they are ADA paratransit eligible, they will be allowed “presumptive eligibility” and shall be provided with up to 21 consecutive days of paratransit service. For more information, please contact DART Customer Service at: **515-283-8136**.

TITLE VI

Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI

DART operates its programs and services without regard to race, color and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with DART.

For more information on DART's civil rights program and the procedures to file a complaint, contact **515-283-8100**, email **dart@ridedart.com** with subject line "Title VI;" or visit our administrative office at 620 Cherry Street, Attn: Customer Service Manager, Des Moines, IA 50309. For more information, visit **rideDART.com/about/title-vi-policy**.

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

If information is needed in another language, please contact Customer Service at **515-283-8100**.

Appeal (Grievance) Process

The following information details each step of DART's appeal (grievance) process for Bus Plus service. If an individual would like to appeal (grieve) their eligibility for this service, they must follow the steps below.

1

STEP ONE:

Within 60 days from the notification date listed on your eligibility application form, submit to DART your desire to appeal (grieve) your eligibility for Bus Plus service. This request must be in writing and mailed to the following address:

Luis Montoya
Chief Operating & Planning Officer
Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
620 Cherry Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

2 STEP TWO:

Within five working days of receipt of your written notice to appeal (grieve), DART will notify you of the date, time and location of your appeal (grievance) hearing. You, and/or a representative for you, may be present to state your case to the appeals (grievance) committee.

This committee is comprised of DART's Chief Operating & Planning Officer, Chief Strategy Officer, and two members of the Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC), or other persons representing interests of persons with disabilities. DART's paratransit department will state their reasons for denying service and you, or your representative, may respond to these reasons.

3 STEP THREE:

Within five working days after the hearing, a written response stating the following will be mailed to you:

- Committee's decision
- Reason for the decision
- If eligible, an explanation of Bus Plus service for which you are eligible

If the committee decision takes longer than 30 days after the hearing, you will receive paratransit service until you receive notice that the appeal has been denied. The committee's decision on this application will be final and binding for one year from the date of the appeal (grievance) committee's written response. If your condition changes, you may submit a new application. The new application must be accompanied by a physician's statement indicating your change of condition.

If you would like to have assistance in preparing for the hearing, please contact Luis Montoya at **515-283-8102** for a list of people willing to assist you with advice and direction.

SHARE

YOUR QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR COMMENTS

DART will do its best to answer any rider questions, resolve concerns or receive comments. Rider questions, concerns or comments may be directed to DART Customer Service at **515-283-8100**, sent via fax to: **515-283-8103** or by mail:

DART

Attn: Customer Service
620 Cherry Street
Des Moines, IA 50309



