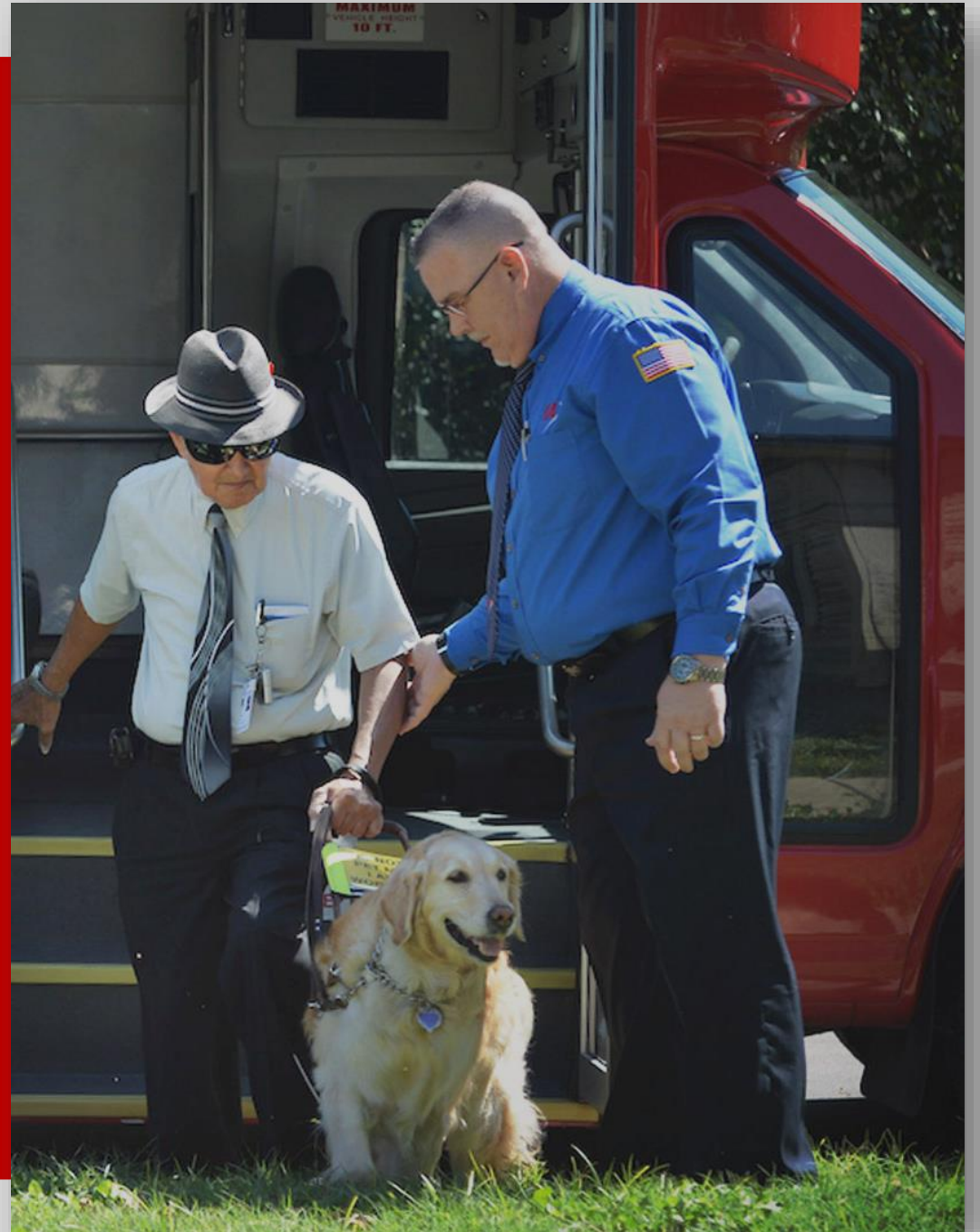


# What is Paratransit?



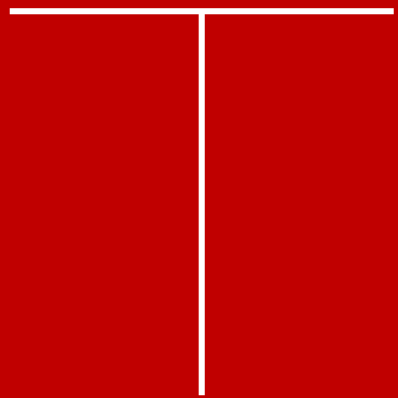
Jeffrey C. Arndt  
President/CEO  
VIA Metropolitan Transit



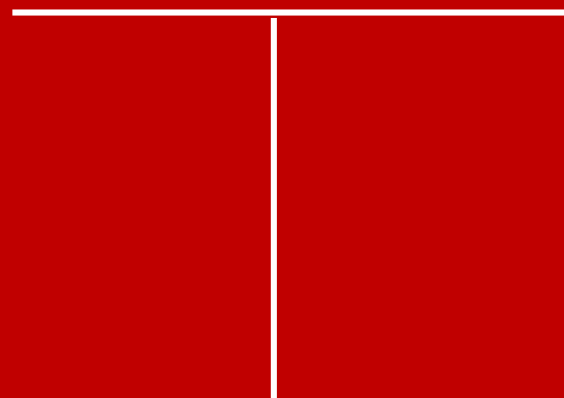
**Para**

**+**

**Transit**



**similar  
but distinct from**



**fixed-route  
traditional service**

# How is Paratransit distinct?

- **Requires customer interaction to get service**
- **Does not limit to fixed-route stops**

# By any other name ...

- **Demand-response service**
- **ADA complementary paratransit service**
- **Mobility-on-Demand service**
- **Rideshare (vans, carpools, TNC)**
- **Jitney**

# In Urban Settings

- **ADA complementary paratransit**
- **Mobility-on-Demand**
- **Rideshare matching**

# In Rural Settings

- **Demand-response service to the general public**

# Examples from VIA



***VIAtrans***



***VIA Vanpool***



# **Paratransit Transportation Solutions for Texans with Disabilities**

## **Paratransit Eligibility**

**Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County  
(Houston METRO)**

December 2021



# How is Paratransit Eligibility Determined?

Disability alone does not determine paratransit eligibility; the decision is based on the applicant's functional ability to use the fixed route bus and is not a medical decision.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations in Appendix D to 49 C.F.R. Section 37.125 explain: "The substantive eligibility process is not aimed at making a medical or diagnostic determination.

# How is Paratransit Eligibility Determined?

While evaluation by a physician (or professionals in rehabilitation or other relevant fields) may be used as part of the process, a diagnosis of a disability is not dispositive. What is needed is a determination of whether, as a practical matter, the individual can use fixed route transit in his or her own circumstances.”

Transit agencies, with input from the communities they serve, devise the specifics of their individual eligibility processes. The DOT ADA regulations in Section 37.125 set only broad requirements that all agencies must incorporate, such as written notification of eligibility decisions and an opportunity for an appeal.

# Eligibility Categories

- 1. The person cannot navigate the system independently**
- 2. The person needs an accessible vehicle**
- 3. There are obstacles which prevent the person from accessing the bus or rail system**

# Types of Eligibility Granted by the Transit Agency

**Unconditional Eligibility**

**Conditional Eligibility**

**Temporary Eligibility**

# Application Process



1900 Main  
P.O. Box 61429  
Houston, TX 77208-1429

Client ID #	<input type="text"/>
Date Entered	<input type="text"/>
Processed by	<input type="text"/>

## Application for METROLift Service

Instructions: On pages 1 – 4 of this application, METROLift is asking for information about you and your ability to use METRO bus service. Please take the time to answer ALL questions carefully and completely. We cannot determine your eligibility for METROLift service without this information. A friend, guardian, caregiver, agency service representative or family member may help you complete your portion of the application, pages 1- 4. Accurate information is required about you, your medical impairment, and your functional capacity. Pages 5 - 6 must be completed and certified by a physician/certified health professional who is familiar with your impairment or condition.

If you have questions, please call METROLift Customer Service at 713-225-0119.

Have you ever applied for METROLift?      No       Yes

### TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

Name of Applicant Nombre de solicitante		Last/Apellido	First/Nombre	Middle/Inicial	Social Security Number (ONLY last 4 digits) Numero del Seguro Social del Solicitante (Los ultimos 4 numeros)	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	XXX - XX - <input type="text"/>	
Address/Street / Dirección/Calle			Apartment Numero de Apatamento	City/Ciudad	Zip Code/Codigo Postal	
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Date of Birth/Fecha de Nacimiento			Home Phone Number/En Casa Número de Teléfono		Other Phone/Otro Teléfono	
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
Apartment Complex Name/Nombre de Apartamentos					Gate Code/Codigo de Cochera	
<input type="text"/>					<input type="text"/>	
Mailing Address/Dirección de Envío If different from home address/Si diferente de domicilio			City/Ciudad	State/Estado	Zip Code/Codigo Postal	
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Applicant Signature (required) Firma				Date/Fecha		
X _____				<input type="text"/>		
Name of Emergency Contact/Contacto de Emergencia			Relationship/Relación	Emergency Phone/Numero de Emergencia		
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		

# Application Process

## INDIVIDUAL AND MOBILITY INFORMATION

1. Please state your disability(s).

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---

---

2. What assistive device(s) do you use when traveling? (Please check all that apply.)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support Cane     | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual wheelchair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Trained service animal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crutches         | <input type="checkbox"/> Powered wheelchair | <input type="checkbox"/> Communications device  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walker           | <input type="checkbox"/> Power scooter      | <input type="checkbox"/> "White cane"           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leg brace(s)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable oxygen    | <input type="checkbox"/> None                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) | <hr/>                                       |   |

3. What is the nearest street intersection to your home? (Example: Polk & Wayside)

---

4. Can you walk or use your wheelchair or assistive device(s) from your home to that intersection without assistance?  Yes  No

If "no," please explain.

---

5. Can you find your way to a bus stop without getting lost?  Yes  No

If "no," please explain.

---

6. How long can you stand and wait for a bus?

- 15 minutes  10 minutes  5 minutes  Less than 5 minutes

7. All buses have a "destination sign" in front, which shows the route name and number.

Can you read a bus destination sign? Yes  No

Can you ask the driver where the bus is going? Yes  No

Can you give or write a note to the driver? Yes  No

Can you understand the driver's answer? Yes  No

If "no" to any questions, please explain.

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# Application Process

8. If you were on the bus, could you pay the fare by putting money in the fare box, or by tapping the METRO Q Card on the Q box?  Yes  No

If "no" please explain

9. If you were on the bus, could you recognize the place where you wanted to get off the bus? Yes  No

If "no," please explain.

10. Please tell us about the times when you can use METRO's local fixed-route bus service? (Example: if short distance to bus stop; take attendant; need to get somewhere.)

11. Have you ever received "orientation and mobility training" or "travel training?" Yes  No

If "yes," please list any METRO bus routes on which you can travel:

12. Please tell us the reasons you feel you cannot use METRO's local fixed-route bus service for some or all trips.

13. How do you currently travel (self, family, friends, bus, rail, METROLift, etc.)?

Please explain.

14. Do you require someone to travel with you? Yes  No

If "yes," please explain

15. Can you wait independently alone at your residence and places to which you travel?

Yes  No

If "no," please explain.



# Application Process

## AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION:

I state that the information I have provided is true and accurate.

I authorize the release of diagnostic and functional information as requested on pages 5 and 6 to METRO for the sole purpose of making a determination regarding my eligibility for paratransit service (METROLift) and understand that personal and medical information will be kept confidential.

I understand that intentionally providing false or misleading information or refusal to undergo an in-person interview assessment is grounds for denial of METROLift services.

If approved, I agree to follow the rules and guidelines established by METROLift and to promptly inform METROLift of any changes in my residence, phone number and, if applicable, my representative's name and phone number; and any significant change in my condition that would affect my level of mobility.

I understand that failure to follow proper procedures or cooperate with METROLift staff, demonstrating illegal or disruptive behavior or, if my condition at any time poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, such situations may result in either suspension and/or termination of service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

If someone other than the applicant is preparing this form, please provide the following information about the preparer:

Name: (please print)

Day Phone:

Relationship:

Preparer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Application Process

## Dear Physician or Healthcare Professional:

We need your assistance in determining eligibility for services provided by METROLift to persons with disabilities who are unable to use local bus transportation. We are seeking specific information as to what prevents the person from using METRO Rail and the METRO bus routes that provide transportation throughout the area. METRO buses are equipped with ramps, lifts, and kneeling features to assist boarding as well as automatic announcements of major stops to help riders know where they are along the route. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 49 CFR 37.121, Subpart F states– “..each public entity operating a fixed route system shall provide paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system.” “By complementary, DOT means service for individuals with disabilities who cannot use the fixed route bus system.” The information requested of you in the following sections will be used to help determine the applicant’s METROLift eligibility. It is important that all questions be answered completely and accurately to the best of your knowledge and in accordance with your records. If the information is incomplete or unclear, we may need to contact you for clarification. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Have you previously seen this patient?  Yes  No

2. Please rate (Excellent / Good / Fair / Poor / None / Don't Know) the applicant in terms of:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	None	Don't Know
<b>a. Upper body strength</b>						
<b>b. Lower body strength</b>						
<b>c. Coordination</b>						
<b>d. Balance</b>						
<b>e. Self awareness</b>						
<b>f. Independent judgment</b>						
<b>g. Sense of direction</b>						
<b>h. Ability to understand and follow instructions</b>						
<b>i. Verbal communication</b>						
<b>j. Written communication</b>						
<b>k. Stamina and endurance</b>						

3. In your opinion, can the applicant travel independently from his/her house to the sidewalk?

Yes  No  Sometimes

If "no" or "sometimes," please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Can the applicant walk up and down two steps?  Yes  No  Sometimes

5. Assuming the use of a mobility aid, if applicable, and with no major barriers in his/her path, how far can the applicant independently travel without assistance?

less than 1/4 mile  1/4 mile  1/2 mile  3/4 mile  more than 3/4 mile

# Application Process

6. Does the applicant's disability require him/her to travel with another person who provides personal assistance?  Yes  No  Sometimes
7. Please provide medical diagnoses in layman's terms to describe the applicant's primary impairments or disabling conditions. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. We are seeking specific information as to what prevents your patient from accessing the local bus and rail system. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Is the condition  Permanent or  Temporary (months) \_\_\_\_\_
10. If visually impaired, what is the applicant's best corrected acuity?  
(Snellen)? (R) \_\_\_\_\_ (L) \_\_\_\_\_  
Field Restriction: (R) \_\_\_\_\_ (L) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Testing: \_\_\_\_\_
11. If cognitively impaired, what is the applicant's cognitive age, and IQ level?  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Is the applicant a wheelchair user?  Yes  No If yes, how often \_\_\_\_\_
13. Does the applicant use other mobility aids?  Yes  No If yes, please describe.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PHYSICIAN OR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL'S CERTIFICATION :

I certify that the information I have provided herein is a fair representation of this applicant's medical impairment or condition and is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the information provided herein will be used for the sole purpose of determining the applicant's eligibility for paratransit services. I also agree that METROLift may contact me for clarification of any information I have provided and that I will reply in good faith.

Physician's/Health Professional's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Institution/Facility/Agency Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Suite # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Medical/Social Worker's License Number \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's/Health Professional's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Note: Additional signature of physician/healthcare professional on his/her letterhead or prescription verifying completion of application is required.



# In-Person Interviews and Functional Assessments



# In-Person Interviews and Functional Assessments





# Appeals Process



## NOTICE OF APPEAL FOR ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY

I, \_\_\_\_\_, wish to appeal the  
paratransit eligibility decision:

Check one

- Eligibility to use the METROLift service was denied -  
Appealing for ADA Paratransit eligibility
- Temporary eligibility was granted -  
Appealing for longer ADA Paratransit eligibility

Therefore, I am requesting to file an appeal with the Appeals Hearing  
Officer.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ METROLift ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your appeal must be received within 60 days of notification of eligibility  
determination. See instructions on the opposite side of this form for alternative  
ways to appeal without using this form.

(over)

## Process for Eligibility Appeals

Appeals are conducted by the Appeals Hearing Officer, who is an advocate for people  
with disabilities. You have the right to file an appeal and may also request for an in  
person hearing or a telephone hearing. All in person and telephone hearings must be  
scheduled with the Appeals Coordinator.

To file an appeal you have several options:

- Call METROLift Customer Service at 713-223-0119, Appeals – menu option 3,  
Monday-Friday 8:00AM-5:00PM
- Complete and return the Notice of Appeal form included in your letter
- Write your own letter notifying METRO of your intent to appeal

These are options; you do not have to file a written appeal. All of these options provide  
an opportunity to be heard and to be present information and arguments to why you  
believe your suspension should be changed. If you decide to file an appeal via mail or if  
you decide to submit additional documentation as part of your appeal, please send items  
to the following address:

### METROLift Suspension Appeals

P.O. Box 61429

Houston, TX 77208-1429

Or fax to: Attention Appeals Department at 713-739-4971

The decision of the Appeals Hearing Officer is final. Patrons have the right to use the  
service if the Hearing Officer has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion  
of the appeals process.

# Travel Training





# Travel Training



# Engagement with your Local Transit Agency

**METROLift Advisory  
Committee**

**METRO Accessible Taskforce**

**Community Leaders' Briefing  
Team**





# METRO's Board of Directors

