



Paratransit and Demand Response Services

No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy

General Policy Statement

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidance permits transit agencies to suspend ADA riders who “establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips” after providing a rider due process. A “pattern or practice” involves “intentional, repeated or regular actions, not isolated, accidental, or singular incidents.” The purpose of a suspension process would be to prevent chronic “no-show” occurrences.

Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) records each customer’s no-shows and late cancellations and applies appropriate sanctions when customers establish a pattern or practice of excessive no-shows. The No-Shows and Late Cancellation Policy defines no-shows and late cancellations and sets rules for suspension of service to BFT’s Dial-A-Ride (DAR) riders who miss scheduled rides. BFT’s purpose for this policy is to direct riders’ attention to their own no-show and late cancellation incidents so the overall number of no-shows and late cancellations are minimized. This is important because the no-shows and late cancellation incidents affect the cost and quality of DAR service provided to all riders.

Procedures, Wait Time, & Pick-up Window

DAR schedules pick up and return trips separately. If a rider is a no-show for any trip for the day, all later same day trips are not canceled. Federal ADA paratransit regulation does not allow service providers to cancel trips without notification from riders or representatives. Failure to cancel remaining scheduled trips will result in additional no-shows.

When DAR reservations are made, the rider will be given a thirty (30) minute pick-up window. The driver can wait no more than five (5) minutes after arriving at the pick-up location. The DAR vehicles will leave if the rider is not ready, and the rider will be recorded as a no-show.

DAR will not strand riders who have been transported to their destinations, but are not there when they are scheduled for their return trip. Upon notification that the rider is ready for their return trip, a vehicle will be sent as soon as possible; however, no pick-up window will be guaranteed.

Definitions

A no-show is a trip that has not been canceled prior to the scheduled pick-up time. If a rider is not ready to go within five (5) minutes of the arrival of the vehicle, as long as the driver arrives within the pick-up window, the rider will be charged with a no-show. A no-show occurs when:

- There has been no call by the rider (or the rider's representative) to cancel the scheduled trip time AND
- The vehicle arrives at the scheduled location within the thirty (30) minute window AND
- The operator cannot reasonably see the customer approaching the vehicle after waiting five (5) minutes AND
- The Dispatch office is notified to verify that the operator is at the correct location.

A no-show may also be charged when:

- The driver arrives and the rider cancels his/her ride.

FTA permits transit agencies to count late cancellations as no-shows for trips canceled less than 1 hour prior to the pick-up time negotiated with the rider, and only under the same circumstances.

No-shows for reasons that are beyond the rider's control will not be counted. Examples of excused no-shows include, but are not limited to:

- Family emergency
- Illness that prevents the rider from calling to cancel
- Personal attendant or another party who didn't arrive on time to assist the rider
- Rider was inside calling to check the ride status and was on hold for an extended time
- Rider's appointment ran long and did not provide opportunity to cancel in a timely way
- Rider's mobility aid failed
- Appointment canceled or delayed for reasons that are not the rider's fault
- Natural Disasters (e.g., flood, earthquake, etc.)
- BFT error; staff did not note the cancellation request or rider just realized that staff scheduled the trip inconsistently with the rider's request
- Vehicle arrival past the scheduled pick-up window

Repeated failures to take scheduled trips, regardless of the reason, are subject for review.

Trips can be canceled daily up to 9:30pm with the dispatch office, or a message can be left at any time on the dispatch line if a representative is not available.

No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations are not excused when the trip is not canceled at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time and is missed for one of the following reasons:

- Rider didn't want to travel today
- Rider changed their mind about using the ride reserved
- Rider didn't know that he/she had a ride scheduled or was supposed to call to cancel
- Rider got another ride
- Rider told someone else that he/she was not planning to travel (driver, facility, etc.) or someone else booked the ride for him/her
- Rider does not want to ride with a specific driver or rider, or on a specific vehicle

Pattern & Practice of Excessive No-Shows

In order to establish whether or not a particular rider has established a "pattern or practice" of missing scheduled trips, BFT must consider the rider's frequency of use of the paratransit service. Three no-shows in 30 days for a regular rider who uses the service daily to commute to and from work as well as for other purposes, for example, is very different from three no-shows by a customer who schedules only five trips per month. BFT will not use no-shows beyond a rider's control as a basis for determining a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips.

No-Show Point System

Point Assessment

If the rider incurs a no-show, the rider will be notified by letter sent to the mailing address on file. The letter will notify the rider of how many no-shows have occurred in the last thirty (30) days. If the rider feels that the no-show should be excused, they should contact DAR at the reservation phone number as soon as possible.

DAR tracks trip status for every trip booked. The following penalty points are assigned as:

1. No-Show or Cancel at Door = 2 points
2. Late Cancel = 1 point

DAR identifies riders who have met the following criteria within a thirty (30) day period:

1. No-shows/Late Cancellations at 10% or more of their scheduled trips
2. The rider has six (6) or more no-show or late cancellation points

Penalty Assessment

Riders incurring the penalty assessment, as defined above, are subject to suspension for a reasonable period of time. Repeated violations of this policy will cause the length of suspensions to increase. The following suspension periods shall apply to violations of this policy that occur within a (30) day period.

<u>Points</u>	<u>Minimum % of Trips</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
6	10	7 Day Suspension
12	10	14 Day Suspension

In any thirty (30) day continuous period, if a rider who has scheduled trips and exhibits a pattern or practice of no-shows and/or late cancellations for at least 10% of those trips and has six (6) or more no-show and/or late cancellations points, the rider will receive written Notice of Suspension of the violation, citing which trips were no-shows and/or late cancellations and the proposed date of suspension of service.

No-shows or late cancellations that occur due to circumstances beyond the control of the customer, as reported to Dial-A-Ride, will not be considered a violation.

APPEALING A NO SHOW/SUSPENSION

APPEAL RIGHTS

You have the right to appeal the notice of no-show or suspension. Appeals may be made in writing to appeal the notice of no-show or suspension. Appeals must be sent to the ADA Eligibility Coordinator at **1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, WA 99352** within (14) fourteen days of the date of notice.

Step 1:

Please provide your response in writing. Provide a copy of the notice submitted to you. The appeal should state the reason you believe that the no-show/late cancel notice or suspension is invalid.

Step 2:

Upon receipt of the request for appeal, the ADA Eligibility Coordinator will determine if the no-show/late cancel penalty or suspension should be withdrawn. Based on the investigation and the rider's trends and patterns, the coordinator will consider the following circumstances for removing a no-show or late cancel.

- Medical emergencies or situations outside the control of the rider or caregiver.

Step 3:

If you are not satisfied with the ADA Eligibility Coordinator investigation or decision, you may request a meeting with the Assistant Director of Transit Operations or their designee to review your concerns.

A suspension will not occur until all appeal remedies that you have requested have been exhausted.