

# Handi-Wheels

## Jefferson City's Paratransit Bus Service

[www.jefftran.org](http://www.jefftran.org)

573-634-6477

**Handi-Wheels Hours of Operation: 6:40 AM to 5:20 PM**

**Handi-Wheels Scheduling Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM**

**Handi-Wheels Dispatch Hours: 6:30 AM to 5:20 PM**

### Introduction

JEFFTRAN paratransit, known as Handi-Wheels is a publicly-funded paratransit provider operating a specialized bus service, **serving persons with qualifying disabilities who are unable to use regular fixed-route buses.** Handi-Wheels provide public origin to destination paratransit service within the city limits of Jefferson City. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires transit operators to establish specific eligibility criteria for users of paratransit service and mandates that there are no trip priorities on paratransit. This Rider Guide has been prepared to assist customers in understanding paratransit services, how they work and how best to use them responsibly.



### ADA Paratransit Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into federal law in 1990. ADA prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, public services including transportation, public accommodations, private services, and telecommunications. ADA requires all public transit operators to provide a special service to eligible disabled individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using accessible public transit. The special service, called "paratransit service", operates at similar times and in similar areas as the existing fixed-route transit. This ADA Service Corridor includes the area within three-quarters (3/4) of a mile from the regular fixed-route. Those eligible, certified patrons whose pick-up and/or drop-off point is outside the ADA Service Corridor may be accommodated on a space-available basis. – Americans with Disabilities Act (Part/Section 37.131).

## About Handi-Wheels

Handi-Wheels is a shared ride, origin to destination paratransit service for people with qualifying disabilities. Handi-Wheels provide **transportation to individuals who because of disability are unable to use the public bus for some or all of their trips.** Handi-Wheels service is dedicated to safely transporting disabled and special needs passengers. ADA-compliant Handi-Wheels vans feature raised roofs, wheelchair lifts and restraint systems. **An application to determine eligibility is required.**

## Paratransit – a Shared-Ride Service

Handi-Wheels paratransit service is a shared-ride system. It is not a taxi service. Other passengers may be on board during transit to a passenger's destination. Your scheduled pick-up times or route of travel may be adjusted so another passenger can be accommodated. The vehicle may stop and pick up other riders as it proceeds to your destination. Shared rides lower the cost of paratransit service by increasing system productivity. Handi-Wheels paratransit schedulers may ask you to accept trip reservation times which may differ from your original requested pick-up time. Your reservation time may be moved up to an hour earlier or later than you requested. We ask that you be flexible. Adjusting your time allows more passengers to be served.

## How to apply for HANDI-WHEELS

An individual wishing to use the Handi-Wheels service should complete an application by filling out and returning the “City of Jefferson Request for Certification of ADA Paratransit Eligibility” form (hereafter referred to as application). Only original applications are accepted. **We are unable to accept faxed or emailed applications.**

- **Applications can be obtained at:**
  - [www.jefftran.org](http://www.jefftran.org)
  - City Hall, 320 E. McCarty St. at the Finance Window on the upper level
  - **JEFFTRAN** Transfer Facility at 820 E. Miller St. at the Customer Service Window.
  - Call (573) 634-6477 ask staff to send you and application by mail.

Staff is available from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday to respond to your questions about Handi-Wheels service.

## Paratransit Eligibility

In order to receive service, all Handi-Wheels passengers must be ADA certified by completing the application form and qualifying under one or more of the ADA eligibility criteria listed below. The application must be completed in full. All areas must be filled out; including medical verification by a qualified medical provider (a list of qualified providers is included on the application).

### ADA Eligibility Criteria:

1. You are unable to independently board, ride, or exit a lift-equipped accessible JEFFTRAN transit bus, or similar transit vehicle because of your disability.
2. You are unable to travel to or from a transit stop because of your disability.

Passengers may be considered fully or conditionally eligible the above under categories depending on their disability. Conditionally eligible passengers are passengers who can use the fixed-route service for a portion

of their trips. Conditionally eligible passengers are required to use fixed-route services whenever conditions permit. This cooperation furthers the ability of the Handi-Wheels program to meet its responsibilities under the ADA. ADA eligible visitors from outside the city may also use the paratransit service. Visitors will be eligible for any combination of 21 days of service during any 365-day period beginning with the visitor's first use of Handi-Wheels service.

## **Becoming Certified to Use Handi-Wheels**

Once it has been determined that you are ADA eligible you will then be certified eligible to use Handi-Wheels services throughout Jefferson City. ADA eligibility recertification is conducted every three years. After the forms are filled out and signed by the appropriate persons, the certification process may take up to 21 days to complete. Once notified that you have been certified, you may begin scheduling rides with Handi-Wheels. If you are found ineligible for paratransit service, there is an appeal process.

## **ADA Eligibility**

You are eligible for all or some of your trips on Handi-Wheels if you meet one of the following conditions and a qualified medical person (as specified on the application forms) attests to the following:

1. You meet the conditions established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)\*.
2. You are unable to get on or off an accessible transit bus by yourself.
3. You are unable to get on a transit bus because it does not have a lift.
4. You are unable to travel to or from a bus stop or find your way around the transit system by yourself because of a physical or cognitive functional disability.

\* ADA Definition "disability" Section 504 Compliance Handbook; (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities; (2) a record of such impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment. To fit within the first part of this definition, an individual must have (1) a physical or mental impairment; (2) that substantially limits three or more major life activities. The guidance observes that the definition of "disability" under the ADA and Section 504 might differ from the definition of disability under other laws such as the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act.

## **Eligible Passengers and Guests or PCAs**

Under ADA, each paratransit passenger can ride with:

1. One Handi-Wheels certified personal care attendant (PCA) who provides individual assistance to the qualified passenger. This PCA will not be charged for the trip. This person must be 18 years or older.
2. Two guests. Additional companions may also travel on a space available basis. Guests will be charged for the trip at the same rate as the Handi-Wheels passenger. PCAs and guests must board and disembark at the same locations where the passenger boards and disembarks. Children under 5 ride for free. All children must be accompanied by an adult. To avoid delays, when scheduling a ride, inform the scheduler if anyone will be accompanying the passenger on the trip.

## **Fare Information:**

The one-way fare for registered passengers and guests is \$3.00. Please be prepared to pay the driver with exact change (**drivers do not make change**), or a Punch Card Pass at the time of your ride. Passengers may not ride without payment of fare.

- Cost of paratransit service is \$3.00 for each ride
- Handi-Wheels 10 ride passes are available for \$30.00 each.

## **PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT AND COMPANIONS**

A personal care attendant is a person traveling as an aide to facilitate travel by a person with a disability.

One personal care attendant may accompany an eligible Handi-Wheels rider. The need for a personal care attendant is determined in the application process.

The driver provides assistance getting on and off the bus and with securement of wheelchairs. These facts should be taken into consideration in determining if a personal care attendant will accompany a client.

## **Caregivers:**

- Take care of the passenger's responsibilities if the passenger is incapable of doing so.
- Meet the van to assist in loading and unloading the passengers.

## **Hours of Operation**

Transportation is available Monday through Friday at the same hours as the fixed route buses operate except for the following holidays:

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| * New Year's Day              | * Labor Day                      |
| * Martin Luther King, Jr. Day | * Veterans Day                   |
| * Truman's Birthday           | * Thanksgiving Day               |
| * Memorial Day                | * The Day after Thanksgiving Day |
| * Juneteenth                  | * Christmas Day                  |
| * Independence Day            |                                  |

Handi-Wheels operates Monday through Friday, 6:45 a.m. to 5:20 p.m. Handi-Wheels scheduling hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

## **How to Arrange for a Trip**

For trips inside the ADA Service Corridor call the Handi-Wheels Reservation line at 573-634-6477 at least one and up to fourteen days in advance of your trip. Reservations may be made between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday. When you call a Handi-Wheels scheduler or leaving a message, please have the following information ready:

1. Your name.
2. Client number

3. The day and date you would like transportation.
4. The time you wish to be transported.
5. Your pick-up address.
6. The address of your destination.
7. Your return time and return address.
8. Whether you will be accompanied by a personal service assistant or companion(s).
9. Whether you will be using a mobility device (manual or motorized).
10. It is helpful (but not required) to also provide the telephone number of the destination when it is available.

By doing so, you can help preventable delays can be avoided for both the passenger and others using the service.

**PLEASE ASK THAT YOUR RESERVATIONS BE REPEATED TO YOU IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT ALL THE INFORMATION IS CORRECT. PLEASE WRITE IT DOWN.**

In no case may reservations, cancellations or changes in pick up or drop off is made through the van driver over the radio. The patron must call the Handi-Wheels scheduler.

### **Avoiding Undue Cancellations**

Handi-Wheels is a vital community resource and there are limited resources available to support it. Cancellations are a major contributor to service costs and system inefficiency. Rides canceled too late to schedule another trip in their place result in wasted expense and capacity that goes unused. Handi-Wheels passengers can help by making sure they only schedule rides they plan to take and if they have to cancel, do so with enough advance notice that the rides can potentially be reassigned. By reducing cancellations and no-shows, denials on Handi-Wheels service can be reduced significantly.

### **Cancellations (Call 573 634-6477 to cancel a reservation)**

Late cancellations for Handi-Wheels services are costly to JEFFTRAN and they affect our ability to provide a trip opportunity for other riders. Please cancel trip reservations at least one day in advance whenever possible. If you cancel a trip less than one (1) hour prior to your scheduled pickup time, then you will receive a "No-Show" for that trip.

When canceling a trip, passengers are responsible for providing the following information:

1. Name of the passenger.
2. Client number
3. Time and date of scheduled pick-up.
4. Exact destination address.
4. Status of any other scheduled trips for that day.

The earlier you cancel a trip reservation, the greater the chance the time will be able to be used by another passenger.

In no case are reservations, cancellations or changes in pick up or drop off be made through driver over the radio. **The patron must call the Handi-Wheels scheduler.**

## **No-Show Policy**

Handi-Wheels is an important but limited resource; the missing of scheduled trips is a major contributor to service costs and system inefficiency. In order to protect the quality of service, JEFFTRAN will comply with ADA guidelines and suspend riders who demonstrate a pattern or practice of missed trips.

A no-show happens when a Handi-Wheels rider misses a scheduled trip. This includes any one of the following:

- (a) The van arrives at the agreed upon pick up time and the passenger is absent or declines to travel,
- (b) The passenger cancels the trip less than one (1) hours prior to scheduled pickup time,
- (c) A rider otherwise delays a van.

JEFFTRAN will not penalize a rider for a no show or late cancellation beyond the rider's control or due to operator error. It is the rider's responsibility to notify JEFFTRAN as soon as he or she is reasonably able that the missed trip was due to circumstances beyond his or her control.

In an effort to reduce excessive cancellations and no shows, JEFFTRAN staff will review any client who appears to have a pattern or practice of cancellations or no shows. If, in a 30 day period, a rider taking 1-15 rides cannot have more than 2 No Shows, a rider taking more than 16 rides cannot have more than 5 No Shows. Then the rider may be subject to a suspension of services. (See JEFFTRAN's No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy)

The individual patron will be notified in writing before any suspension is imposed. All suspensions shall be for a reasonable period of time, as determined by JEFFTRAN is stated in the No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy. In determining reasonableness, JEFFTRAN shall consider the number and frequency of no-shows during the 30 day period, any prior history with suspensions for no-shows, and any other relevant circumstances. A rider may appeal the suspension and period of suspension by contacting the ADA Coordinator within 30 days of notification.

## **On the Day of Your Trip**

Please have your fare and ID card ready at the time of your pick up. All clients are expected to refrain from using any electronic devices until safely boarded and seated on the Handi-Wheels vehicles. A scheduled trip is considered on time when the vehicle is within 10 minutes before or 10 minutes after the scheduled pick up time. Arrival time is the time when the driver is at the street-level door ready to receive the passenger scheduled pickup time. If the driver arrives before the scheduled pickup time, passengers are not required to leave early. Passenger promptness is important to help Handi-Wheels maintain on-time performance. The driver will leave after waiting five minutes past the scheduled pickup time and record the trip as a no-show. Feel free to call about your ride at any time after the scheduled pick-up time to check on the status

of your vehicle. However, we do ask that you wait at least 10 minutes after the scheduled time before making any calls. Passengers are responsible for providing the following when requesting information on the arrival of a Handi-Wheels vehicle:

1. Passenger's name.
2. Client Number
3. Scheduled pick-up time.
4. Address of pick-up site.
5. Telephone number where passenger can be reached.

## **Tips & Policies**

### **\* BE SURE TO WRITE DOWN YOUR CONFIRMED TRIP TIMES**

When the scheduler confirms your trip times, be sure to understand and write down the times they give you. If necessary ask them to repeat your trip times and even the date/day of your trip(s).

### **\* ALLOW EXTRA TRAVEL TIME**

Trips are scheduled on a shared-ride basis and other passengers may get on or off before reaching your destination. Unexpected delays occur for many reasons including traffic, road construction, bad weather, or when picking up or dropping off other riders.

### **\* BE READY TO LEAVE WHEN THE VAN ARRIVES**

Please be ready to leave at the beginning of your window; the driver will wait only five (5) minutes before proceeding with his/her route.

### **\* LIMIT THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF CARRY-ON ITEMS**

A maximum of five grocery-sized bags are permitted. All carry-on items must be under your control at all times.

## **You find yourself running late**

If you find yourself running late, please call Handi-Wheels as soon as possible. If you are not ready to board when Handi-Wheels arrives, the driver may be instructed to wait no more than 5 minutes before proceeding on to the next scheduled assignment and record the trip as a no-show.

## **When Handi-Wheels Is Late in Picking Up**

Many factors affect the on-time performance of Handi-Wheels vehicles. These include traffic and weather conditions. If Handi-Wheels find it necessary to alter your scheduled pick-up time by 15 minutes or more, Handi-Wheels schedulers will call to advise you when possible.

## **Trip length**

Handi-Wheels has established forty-five (45) minutes as the goal for the maximum length of time a passenger to be on board a vehicle for a trip. However, extenuating circumstances do occur creating exceptions – such as traffic conditions, road construction, weather, etc. – over which JEFFTRAN has no control. Consequently, some trips will exceed this goal. Passengers are advised to discuss their travel times

with Handi-Wheels schedulers if they believe their trips take too long or they experience consistently greater travel times.

### **Driver Assistance**

The driver is able help you on and off the vehicle but will not enter any buildings. The driver will help you up or down the curb or one step. Those patrons using walkers or who just have difficulty climbing steps may ask the driver to use the lift to enter and/or exit the van.

### **Passenger Safety**

At all times, ambulatory passengers should, (but are not required to), wear seat belts. JEFFTRAN recommends that each passenger using a mobility device have their personal lap belt (if applicable) on while on Handi-Wheels vehicles. Each Handi-Wheel vehicle is fitted with seat belts for every passenger seat and securements for most mobility devices. If you use a three wheeled mobility device, (scooter or mobie), the driver may ask you to transfer to a regular seat. This will be done for your protection, as these devices are typically not constructed to withstand the rigors of use as a vehicular passenger seat. If you are not able to comply with this request, you may decline and the driver will secure you in your mobility device and continue with your ride. Passengers are required to follow other safety instructions given by the driver and/or as required by law enforcement or safety officers.

### **Policy:**

#### **Powered and non-powered Mobility Devices:**

When asked to assist, or when the driver sees the need to assist a passenger in a powered or non-powered mobility device, the only assistance that a driver can provide is to steady or stabilize the mobility device as it is maneuvered to or from the lift, up and down the ramp, and into the proper position within the City vehicle. Due to the possibility of injury to the transit operator, all other maneuvers should be performed by the individual operating the mobility device or by their Personal Care Attendant. Handi-Wheels staff cannot assist disabled customers to or from the bus to the door of their pick-up point. The customer must be able to board and depart under their own control or with the help of their own attendant.

Strict observance of all mobility device procedures (such as four-point tie downs) will be observed.

#### **\* MOBILITY DEVICES AND OTHER AIDS**

The ADA requires paratransit van services to transport mobility devices that meet the definition of the "common wheelchair". This means that when measured from 2 inches above the ground, they must:

- Be no wider than 32 inches.
- Be no longer than 48 inches.
- Be no taller than 56 inches.
- Weigh no more than 800 pounds when occupied.



The van driver will assist you up or down one step only to a level surface. If there is more than one step at your home or destination, you must have someone present to assist you on the steps.

### **Mobility Devices and Aids:**

All mobility aids must be in good repair. A driver may refuse to transport if you cannot safely be transported due to a mobility device or aid that is in poor condition. Your mobility device or aid may be considered unsafe if:

- The wheels or other parts are loose
- Tires are flat
- One or both brakes do not hold the wheels securely
- The footrests are missing
- The battery on an electric mobility device has a low charge.

Gerri chairs are not transported at any time.

### **Oxygen:**

If you use portable oxygen, and you are not able to carry or operate it independently, someone must accompany you. Drivers cannot safely assist you onto the vehicle and carry the equipment at the same time. Drivers cannot administer oxygen or operate any other life support equipment.

### **Comments and Complaints**

Customer service representatives are available to take your comments or complaints in writing or by telephone. Please contact the Handi-Wheels Supervisor at 573-634-6598. If you prefer, you can write to us at the address below. Your feedback is appreciated. Comments or complaints may be made directly to JEFFTRAN. Passenger input is important in providing a safe and reliable JEFFTRAN Handi-Wheel service. It is requested that comments or complaints be submitted in a written format whenever possible. If a written submittal is a hardship due to your disability, please give us a call. Complaints should be submitted within 3 days of occurrence to ensure an appropriate response. Serious problems should be communicated immediately.

When making commendations or complaints, passengers are requested to provide as much detailed information as possible including the following information:

1. Passenger's name
2. Passenger's Client number
3. Passenger's address and telephone number
4. Date and time of occurrence/problem
5. Place of incident (when applicable)
6. Scheduled pick-up time
7. Van number
8. Driver or scheduler's name
9. Any other important details that describe the occurrence or problem

You may request that your comments be handled confidentially. Comments or complaints may be made directly to JEFFTRAN Handi-Wheels.

Here is the information you will need to contact us: JEFFTRAN – Handi-Wheels, 820 E. Miller St. Jefferson City, Mo. 65101. Patrons may also make any comments or complaints in person at the JEFFTRAN Transfer Facility at

820 E. Miller St. Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

### **Appeal Process for Determination of Non-Eligibility for ADA Paratransit Service**

If an individual is determined to be non-eligible for Handi-wheels service, an appeal of the decision can be made to the City of Jefferson Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator located in the City Administrator's Office. The period for appealing a determination of non-eligibility will be limited to 60 days. If after 30 days, the appeal has not been decided, the individual will be presumed eligible until a final decision is reached. The individual making the appeal has the right to be heard in person and to have the necessary support, such as a sign language interpreter. All appeals must be made in writing and submitted to the ADA Coordinator. Please include your name, address, telephone number, and a brief explanation of the basis for your appeal. You are welcome to appear in person to present your appeal. If you plan to appear in person, please state if you have any special requirements, such as a sign language interpreter, so the City can make the appropriate arrangements when scheduling your appointment. Appeals should be addressed to:

City of Jefferson

Attn: ADA Coordinator

320 E. McCarty St.

Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

### **Responsibilities of Clients**

Passengers:

- Contact the Handi-Wheels Office well in advance for scheduling appointments, making scheduling changes, or canceling scheduled rides.
- Allow 10 minutes before or after the pick-up times given by the schedulers for the transportation to arrive.
- Be on the lookout for the vans and be ready to board when they arrive.
- Have exact fares ready when boarding the vehicle and have your Handi-Wheels identification card available upon the driver's request.

### **Accidents**

JEFFTRAN must report all injuries and accidents associated with operation of paratransit service. Accidents involving passenger or staff injuries resulting in hospitalization must be reported by telephone within 24 hours of such incidents (573-634-6599), and must be followed up with any written documentation requested by JEFFTRAN.

## **Lost and Found**

Passengers are responsible for all personal items. Passengers can call the Handi-Wheels office to find out about any personal items they may have left on the vehicle. If recovered, Handi-Wheels will hold personal items for 30 days prior to disposal.

## **Vehicles Used in Paratransit Service**

All new/used vehicles and lifts/ramps purchased meet or exceed ADA Accessibility Specifications for Transportation Vehicles.

All vehicles are kept in a safe and well-maintained condition.

## **Two-Way Communication**

Effective two-way radio communication is available on all vehicles for use by the driver.

## **Driver Uniforms**

All drivers will wear proper uniforms. The standard uniform will bear the name JEFFTRAN on shirt, or jacket, and/or cap. Exceptions may be made for authorized special events or dress-down days.

**Thank you for your patronage!**

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*JEFFTRAN's* mission is to improve the community's overall quality of life by providing convenient, reliable, accessible and affordable transportation.