



# **Monroe Transit Paratransit Service Guide**

**Effective April 2008**

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## Introduction

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990** requires the Monroe Transit System and other public transit agencies nationwide to provide complementary paratransit service, or an equivalent public transportation option, to individuals who cannot board, ride, or reach an accessible fixed-route bus due to a disability. This service must be comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use an agency's fixed-route service.

Monroe Transit's fixed-route service is designed to be easy and comfortable for elderly and disabled passengers. All our buses are designed with special features to accommodate elderly and disabled customers. MTS issues Half-Fare cards to senior citizens and disabled riders for use on the fixed-route system. This card allows an eligible individual to travel at half the regular fare on any fixed-route bus during our service hours. The fare may be paid by cash or fare cards. To be eligible for discounts, you must be 62 years of age or older or have a physical or mental disability. For further information, call us at (318) 329-2506 or visit our website at <http://www.monroela.us>.

### **MTS Paratransit**

MTS Paratransit is a service designed by the Monroe Transit System to meet the transportation needs of people with disabilities in the Monroe area. To use MTS services, riders must have a disability that prevents them from using the MTS fixed-route bus system.

### **Service Area:**

MTS Paratransit service runs on the same days and hours as the fixed-route bus system. The service area extends three-quarters of a mile beyond the fixed routes. Neither MTS Paratransit nor Fixed Route operates west of the Ouachita River.

A trip may take more than half an hour from the origin to the destination due to the size of the MTS service area. We are committed to trips that are not excessively long and have adopted the standard that no trip will exceed the length of comparable fixed-route service. Travel time shall be comparable to fixed-route service, consistent with 49 CFR §37.131(f). For more information about the MTS service area, please call us at (318) 329-2506 and speak with one of our customer service representatives.

### Important Phone Numbers

Reservations/TTDY/Information

(318) 329-2506

Transportation Manager/Scheduling Problems

(318)329-2506

Fax

(318) 329-2868

### **Applying For Paratransit Service**

To use the MTS service, you need to complete an application. To request your application, please call MTS at (318) 329-2506 or by **TTY at (318) 329-2506** from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Applications are also available online at [www.monroela.us](http://www.monroela.us).

The MTS Paratransit eligibility application asks for information to determine which public transit service best meets your needs. Healthcare professional verification may be requested when necessary to assist in determining eligibility, but it is not required in all cases. The physician is asked to describe how your disability prevents you from using the fixed route bus service. This evaluation is to help MTS evaluate your transit needs. If you need assistance completing your application, don't hesitate to contact the MTS staff.

All completed applications will receive a response within 21 days of receipt of all required information.

Any fully completed application not approved within this time period will be considered approved until MTS makes a final determination. At that point, you may begin using our service until a determination of the application is rendered. MTS will call you to inform you if your application is not approved within the 21-day approval period.

*The 21-day processing time doesn't apply to incomplete applications or applications not received by MTS.*

Please ensure that all sections of the application are completed before submission; otherwise, the application will be considered incomplete. MTS's staff will return the application to the applicant if it is incomplete.

#### **Applicant's Status Notification:**

Applicants will be notified of their eligibility by phone, in writing, or in alternative formats upon request. You will be instructed on how to obtain an MTS Paratransit photo identification card upon approval. An ID card is required to use the Paratransit service.

#### **Application Denial:**

You have the right to appeal any decision that denies your service. MTS has an appeals process for riders who believe they have not received the service for which they are eligible. Appeals may be in writing or oral and must include a detailed explanation from the applicant of why the denied services are necessary. Appeals must be mailed via certified mail within sixty (60) days to:

**Monroe Transit System  
Paratransit Appeals  
700 Washington  
Street Monroe, La  
71201**

**Recertification:**

MTS requires eligible customers to be re-certified at least every 3 years, or sooner if the qualifying condition is temporary. The eligibility expiration date appears on the ADA photo identification card. It is the customer's responsibility to maintain a valid photo identification card and to reapply for service before the eligibility expiration date. MTS will notify customers whose certifications are nearing expiration. If a customer fails to renew their eligibility, their Paratransit service will be discontinued.

**Paratransit Photo Identification Cards:**

Paratransit photo identification cards must be obtained from MTS after customers receive confirmation of their eligibility for paratransit service. MTS will provide instructions for obtaining a photo ID upon approval of your application. This identification must be presented upon request when using paratransit services.

Your MTS Paratransit photo identification card is accepted throughout the United States. It may be used on paratransit services wherever they are provided for up to 21 days. You must confirm the exact scheduling rules and regulations with local transit authorities.

Your photo ID card is required each time you use the MTS Paratransit service and is also accepted as identification to obtain half-fare discounts on MTS fixed-route bus services. Please contact MTS at (318) 329-2506 for more information.

**Lost ADA Photo ID Cards:**

If you misplace your photo ID card, you can obtain a replacement by calling our customer service representatives at (318) 329-2506. An MTS trip will be scheduled to process the replacement ID. The customer must pay the round-trip fare and a \$5.00 replacement fee for the new identification card.

**Paratransit Eligibility**

If you have a disability that prevents you from using the MTS's fixed route service, you may be eligible for MTS Complementary Paratransit. The ADA defines eligibility for complementary paratransit service in [49 CFR Section 37.123] of the federal regulations. Eligibility is limited to people who fall within one of these categories:

**Category 1**

The first eligibility category includes people who are unable to use fully accessible fixed-route services. Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment, to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed route system without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. [49 CFR Section 37.123 (e) (I)]

**Category 2**

The second category of eligibility includes any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle that is readily accessible to and usable by

individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route. [49 CFR Section 37.123(e) (2)]

### **Category 3**

The third category of eligibility includes any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition that prevents them from traveling to or from a boarding or disembarking location on the system. [49 CFR Section 37.123 (e) (3)]

### **Monroe Transit's Fixed Route System:**

MTS's fixed-route system consists of an MTS bus service that operates on set routes, days, and scheduled times within the MTS service area. MTS buses are wheelchair-accessible and do not require advance scheduling. Paratransit-eligible persons receive a half-fare discount on the bus service with their Paratransit ID card. Persons not eligible for Paratransit service may also receive a half-fare discount if they are age 62 or older, possess a Medicare Card pursuant to Title II/XVII of the Social Security Act, or are disabled (as determined through a brief application process).

### **Paratransit Service**

Paratransit service is designed for individuals whose needs cannot be met by fixed-route service. MTS Paratransit is a shared-ride public transportation service that complements MTS's fixed-route service. MTS provides a service equivalent to that of a fixed-route system. MTS includes service for all types of trips, including work, medical, educational, and recreational.

There are two types of services that MTS's Paratransit Service offers:

**Advanced Reservation service** allows an individual rider to make a reservation for a trip up to three days in advance. There is no limit to the number of non-subscription trips passengers can book on any given service day. An unlimited number of trips can be reserved in a single call.

**The Subscription Service** is offered to MTS customers who have travel patterns to and from the same destinations on the same days and at the same hours at least 3 days per week. Individuals with frequently changing schedules are not eligible for subscription services.

The subscription service is offered Monday through Saturday and is limited to work, medical, and educational trips. When a person is approved for a subscription service, they must contact the scheduler to confirm their desired travel days and times. Once MTS confirms a subscription schedule, the customer does not need to make any further reservation calls, except to cancel any trip they do not plan to take.

Note: MTS does not operate on Sundays or the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Long-term permanent changes to a rider's subscription service must be submitted to MTS at least one week before the change takes effect. MTS cannot guarantee that changes in subscription service

can be accommodated. Temporary changes to the subscription service must be in effect for at least two weeks and submitted one week before the effective date.

The regular subscription service can be reinstated with as little as one day's notice. Unfortunately, same-day changes cannot be accommodated. Subscription service is provided as a convenience to our customers. Availability is on a first-come, first-served basis. A subscription service is not required under the ADA; however, ADA-mandated demands take precedence, and subscription trips may be limited or suspended if they cause capacity issues.

### **Making A Reservation**

Please call our reservation agents at (318) 329-2506. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact us through the Louisiana Relay Service by dialing 711.

#### **Reservation Periods**

Monday-Saturday

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

On Sundays or holidays, when our reservation line is closed, you may still call (318) 329-2506 for reservation confirmation or to change or cancel a trip. In addition, passengers wishing to schedule a trip on Monday may leave a message on our reservation line voicemail between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Sunday immediately preceding the trip. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact us through the Louisiana Relay Service by dialing 711.

Please remember that drivers cannot make, change, or cancel your reservations. To change your reservation, contact an MTS reservation agent.

### **Reservation Information**

Please have the following information available when making a reservation:

- Customer name.
- The exact street addresses (origin and destination).
- Names of complexes or subdivisions, buildings, apartments, and suite numbers.
- Where applicable, easily identified pick-up points should be communicated, such as a hospital, shopping mall, or doctor's office.
- The appointment or the pick-up time. (Remember to indicate if the customer is traveling with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or companions.)
- The return trip information (must provide pick-up time).

Advance reservations must be made 1 to 3 days in advance, and no later than the close of business the day before. Reservations can be made by calling (318) 329-2506, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Same-day service is not guaranteed, but may be provided if capacity allows.

There is no limit to the number of non-subscription trips passengers can book on any given service day. An unlimited number of trips can be reserved in a single call. Every effort will be made to accommodate the requested trip; however, it may be unavailable. In rare instances when demand exceeds available service capacity, MTS reservation agents will offer an alternative time as close as

possible to your requested time.

Trip "negotiations" are permissible under the ADA. Riders requesting a specific pick-up time that is unavailable will be offered the nearest available time within one hour before or after the requested time. If MTS cannot schedule a trip within one hour before or after the requested time, the request will be recorded as a denial. A rider may still accept an alternate pick-up time more than one hour from the requested time. All passengers have the right to reject an alternative trip time.

If your trip can be scheduled within 15 minutes (before or after) the requested pick-up time, there will be no call back from MTS to inform you of the pick-up time. MTS agents will call, when practical, when the vehicle is delayed by 15 minutes or more, to inform you of the delay and provide an estimated arrival time after attempting to dispatch another car. If a passenger arrives late and requires additional time, the rider may call to request a later return trip, and the trip will not be charged as a no-show.

MTS customers may call at any time to ask for an estimated time of arrival (ETA). For specific arrival information for the scheduled vehicle, please call (318) 329-2506. Please limit your calls to when the vehicle is more than 15 minutes late because excessive calls for your ETA will overwhelm the phone system and the reservations agents.

Please remember that you are responsible for arranging vehicle access to gated communities or secured complexes. A driver cannot be delayed trying to locate personnel to provide access to a complex.

#### **Confirmation of Reservations:**

Whenever possible, reservation confirmations are given when you call our reservation office. Reservation changes must be made during regular reservation hours.

#### **Reservation Changes / Cancellation**

For your convenience and that of other passengers, please notify us of any changes to your reservation at the earliest opportunity by calling (318) 329-2506. Last-minute changes to scheduled trips can disrupt other passengers. Failing to notify MTS of your cancellation of a scheduled trip may result in an unnecessary vehicle dispatch. This can cause service disruptions and delays to other passengers.

*An excessive number of late cancellations may result in a temporary suspension of service privileges.*

#### **No-Show Policy**

No-shows or late cancellations caused by circumstances beyond the rider's control, including but not limited to sudden illness, family emergencies, vehicle breakdowns, scheduling or dispatch errors, or other errors attributable to the transit provider, will not be counted toward a pattern or practice determination.

If you are unable to make your trip, please call MTS as soon as possible. If you are a "No-Show" for a scheduled trip, your subsequent trips will still be available. If you do not need these trips, you must call to cancel; otherwise, they will be counted as additional "No-Shows."

**Chargeable No-Shows:**

Scheduling a trip and failing to cancel it properly creates significant transportation and scheduling issues for MTS and all our customers. No-shows take up trips that other passengers might have needed at the time, thereby incurring unnecessary costs.

A chargeable no-show violation will be added to your record when:

1. The bus arrives within the 30-minute pickup window (15 minutes before or after the scheduled time), and the customer fails to board within the five-minute grace period
2. You fail to cancel a scheduled trip, including return trips.
3. You cancel the reservation less than one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time.
4. You choose not to ride the vehicle after it arrives on time at the scheduled pick-up.

No-shows outside rider control are not counted.

Cancellations due to an emergency beyond the customer's control will be considered a "non-chargeable" late cancellation, provided the customer can provide documentation.

MTS cannot reschedule a trip for which the passenger no-showed on the same day. The trip may be rescheduled for a future date.

**No-Show Penalties:**

Sanctions may be imposed if a pattern or practice of missed trips is identified. A pattern or practice involves intentional, repeated, or regular actions, not isolated, accidental, or singular incidents. A review of an individual's No-Shows could occur if there are at least three (3) No-Shows within a thirty (30) day period, and a sanction could be imposed if more than 50% of all trips scheduled were No-Shows. A pattern or practice is determined by the frequency of no-shows relative to the number of scheduled trips and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Prior to any suspension, MTS will conduct an individualized review of the rider's circumstances to determine whether the no-shows constitute a pattern or practice as defined by federal ADA regulations.

1. After one (1) No-Show, an individual will be given a documented verbal warning.
2. After two (2) No-Shows within thirty (30) days, an individual will be given a written warning along with a copy of the No-Show Policy.
3. After three (3) No-Shows within thirty (30) days and exceeding more than 50% of all trips scheduled, a five (5) day suspension of service may occur.

Suspensions shall be proportionate in duration to the pattern or practice identified. Prior to issuing

any sanctions, the individual will be informed, by letter, of the intention to assess. At that time, the individual may present any explanation or evidence for why sanctions should not be imposed. MTS riders' cooperation is vital. By working together, we minimize no-shows and continue improving the efficiency and effectiveness of your transportation.

### **Appeals**

Customers have the right to appeal any written notification they receive from MTS relating to their eligibility. The customer must appeal the notification within 60 days of receipt. Appeals must be written and forwarded to:

**Monroe Transit System  
Paratransit Appeals  
700 Washington Street  
Monroe, LA. 71201**

MTS will respond to all customer appeals in writing within seven (7) days of receipt. If a customer does not appeal the warning or the suspension notification letter, sanctions will take effect on the date stated in the notification letter.

A customer returning to service after a suspension will be placed on probation for six months. During the probation period, sanctions are continued if necessary. Suspended customers completing a six-month probation period without subsequent suspension will have their records cleared of all previous no-show violations.

### **Pick-up Procedures**

To ensure safe, on-time service, you must designate a specific location and inform us where you will wait for pickup. MTS has developed the following procedures to ensure safe vehicle movement and standardized connecting point guidelines:

If the apartment complex is inaccessible to an MTS vehicle, the customer must meet the vehicle at the complex's main entrance.

Before any MTS vehicle can enter apartment complexes that are not easily accessible, the location must be inspected. If the facility has a guarded gate or limited access, the customer should inform the security staff of the scheduled pick-up and return times. It is your responsibility to notify MTS of the security procedures when the reservation is made and to arrange vehicle access. The paratransit vehicle cannot be delayed due to complicated access requirements.

If you require assistance from the door of your pick-up location to our bus, please inform us in advance of your pick-up time. Our driver will meet you at your door. Please inform your driver if you require assistance from the bus to the drop-off location door.

MTS is committed to arriving within the 30-minute pick-up window (15 minutes before or after the scheduled time). If the customer is not at the designated pickup location within the designated pickup window and the five-minute grace period has expired, the vehicle will depart, and the customer will be declared a "No-Show." Out of courtesy to other MTS

customers scheduled on the same vehicle, the driver will wait no longer than a five-minute grace period. Customers must be ready to depart at any time within the 30-minute window specified at the time of reservation.

The vehicle will depart if a customer has not boarded within the 5-minute grace period. *The dispatcher will not call the customer by telephone to advise that the vehicle has arrived.* MTS, however, will call any sight-impaired or hearing-impaired customer by telephone to notify them that the vehicle has arrived. The Operator may sound their horn, but is not permitted to exit the vehicle to inform the customer of their arrival. It is the customer's responsibility to be ready when the vehicle arrives.

For your convenience, MTS offers an app that lets you see your bus's location and arrival time. To get the app, please visit the App Store and download the ETA Spot App. Please don't hesitate to contact a reservationist at (318) 329-2506 if you have difficulty finding or using the app.

Please note that the MTS vehicle cannot wait while customers conduct business at their destination for your and others' convenience.

### **Boarding the MTS Vehicles:**

MTS customers must have the correct fare in cash or an authorized MTS fare card when boarding the vehicle. *Drivers cannot make change, nor can they receive change from passengers.* The customers may be required to present their MTS ADA photo ID.

Customers are only to pay for the current one-way trip. If you plan to pay for the return trip or future trips, a ten-ride pass can be purchased from operators or via the MTSPay app. A cash fare or pass is required each time the customer boards the vehicle. MTS cannot be held responsible for any overpayment of fare; however, the farebox issues a charge card.

*\* The app may be downloaded from the app store on your mobile device. Please don't hesitate to contact a reservationist at (318) 329-2506 if you have difficulty finding or using the app.*

### **Driver Assistance:**

Drivers will assist the customer on or off the vehicle and to the building doorway if the customer requests. The driver will verbally indicate to visually impaired customers waiting at the curb that the paratransit vehicle has arrived.

When necessary to accommodate an individual's disability, Monroe Transit System will provide assistance beyond the curb, up to and including origin-to-destination service, consistent with ADA reasonable modification requirements.

### **PCAs & Guests**

When you are unable to travel alone, MTS encourages you to travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). PCAs can travel with MTS customers at no cost. When making your reservation, please advise the MTS reservation agent that your PCA will accompany you. A PCA may include a friend, family member, or paid employee who will assist you.

One guest may also accompany customers. Additional guests may travel on a space-available basis.

Guests are subject to the regular paratransit fare and must have the same travel arrangements as the customer. The companion does not need to be certified by MTS or to present a photo ID.

You must inform the reservation agent at the time of booking whether a travel companion or a PCA will accompany you to ensure an accurate vehicle headcount. A responsible adult must accompany children aged five years and younger.

### **MTS Fare**

The cash fare for a one-way trip on MTS is \$2.50, which is twice the fixed-route fare of \$1.25. Authorized personal care attendants ride for free. All other companions must pay the regular fare per trip. Exact cash is required; no change will be given except with an electronic change card.

You can buy MTS ride tickets on the ADA bus. The price for an MTS 10-ride ADA ticket is \$23.50. Cash and money orders are accepted for 10-ride tickets. You can also buy MTS cards using the MTSPay app, by visiting Monroe Transit at 700 Washington Street, Monroe, LA 71201, or by mail—sending a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope with your payment to:

**MTS Paratransit  
700 Washington Street  
Monroe, LA.71201**

### **Visitors With Disabilities**

MTS will provide 21 days (nonconsecutive) of service during a 365-day period. The 365-day period will begin on the first day of service [49 CFR 37.127]:

1. The visitor presents documentation that he/she meets the ADA eligibility guidelines for ADA paratransit service from another jurisdiction. This documentation may include, but is not limited to, a valid ADA paratransit ID card or a determination letter from another transit provider. [49 CFR 37.127 (C)]
2. The visitor provides proof of residency in another jurisdiction, documentation indicating a disability that prevents him/her from using the MTS fixed route system. [49 CFR 37.127 (d)]
3. The visitor who applies in person, whose disability is apparent, and does not provide documentation of home jurisdiction eligibility, must provide documentation of place of residency.

All visitors who provide the required documentation will receive the same service as any other ADA paratransit client.

MTS will require visitors to complete a full application for MTS paratransit service more than 21 days after service in any 365-day period. [49 CFR 37.127 (e)]

### **Using MTS Paratransit**

**Ambulatory Customers:**

Customers unable to use the vehicle's steps may request that the ramp or wheelchair lift be extended to assist with boarding. Ambulatory customers who use the lift must be able to stand without assistance to hold onto the handrails.

**Wheelchairs:**

MTS will transport all types of wheelchairs, provided the wheelchair lift can physically accommodate them.

**Wheelchair Securement / Seat Belts:**

Wheelchair securement is offered to all passengers using mobility devices and is recommended for safety. Passengers may decline securement after being informed of its recommendation. No waivers or written acknowledgments are required, and service will not be denied solely because a passenger declines a lap belt.

**Transporting Packages:**

Each passenger is allowed up to three packages (plastic grocery or shopping bags). Customers should make other arrangements for packages exceeding three parcels. Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated.

Customers may be required to secure their packages at their seats due to limited storage space on the vehicle. The combined weight of all packages must not exceed 25 pounds. Passengers may load only three bags in the vehicle.

**Animals:**

Service animals and service animals in training are permitted on all MTS vehicles without being caged. MTS will not transport other animals. For safety reasons, drivers are not allowed to carry cages or handle service animals. No identification or documentation may be required.

**Your Responsibility When Riding an MTS Vehicle:**

The following rules of conduct are provided for your safety and comfort as well as all MTS Paratransit customers:

Each customer must comply with the rules of conduct. Actions constituting misconduct, including illegal, violent, or seriously disruptive behavior, will be grounds for suspending the customer's service. Examples of direct threats include violent behavior, credible threats of harm, possession of weapons, or conduct that poses an immediate risk to safe vehicle operation.

Service suspension may occur only after written notice, individualized review, and an opportunity to appeal, except in cases involving an immediate and serious threat to the health or safety of the rider, other passengers, or transit staff. MTS will consider appeals of such service suspensions on a case-by-case basis.

Service suspensions are temporary and proportionate to the severity and frequency of the behavior. Permanent termination of ADA paratransit service is not imposed except as permitted by federal regulation.

Customers requiring physical assistance outside the vehicle (e.g., to or from their door, or up stairways or on difficult grades) should have a PCA or a guest accompany them in the vehicle. The PCA will be responsible for providing the customer with the necessary physical assistance. In addition, Paratransit Operators will provide assistance upon request. It is the customer's responsibility to watch for the bus. MTS operators are not responsible for entering establishments to find passengers.

Customers requiring medication or oxygen at regular intervals should be advised that travel time on the paratransit vehicle is comparable to that on the fixed-route system. Rides are subject to delays that may result in a customer's on-board time exceeding 60 minutes. Public transportation is subject to unpredictable traffic delays and mechanical problems.

Note: MTS operators are not responsible for administering medications. Medication administration when in an MTS vehicle is the customer's responsibility. Any customer requiring assistance with medication or oxygen administration while in the vehicle must travel with a PCA or companion. Should medication or oxygen administration be necessary while in the vehicle, MTS will contact emergency medical services to administer the required medication at the customer's expense. Repeated incidents in which medication schedules disrupt or delay other MTS customers may result in an evaluation of the individual's suitability for MTS services.

MTS has a no-smoking policy throughout the transit system.

Customers are prohibited from eating or drinking in the vehicle unless a documented medical condition requires it at specified times. In such cases, the **customer must advise the driver of this fact.**

The use of alcoholic beverages or riding under the influence of intoxicating drugs or alcohol is prohibited at all times.

Customers are prohibited from playing the radio without headphones.

Customers may not operate or tamper with any equipment while in the vehicle. This rule includes the operation of the hydraulic lift and ramp and attempts to remove wheelchair tie-downs or passenger seat belts.

#### **Driver's Responsibilities:**

Drivers are expected to obey the same rules as our customers. The following additional rules also apply:

- Drivers will assist only customers in boarding and disembarking the vehicle or to/from the doorway of their point of origin/destination.
- Drivers can assist with no more than three packages per customer.
- Drivers do not accept tips or gratuities or act in a manner that suggests that tipping is appropriate.
- Drivers are responsible for operating the hydraulic lift and ramp and securing mobility devices safely in the vehicle.

- Drivers cannot leave their vehicle unattended unless they are assisting a customer to/from the doorway of the building.
- Drivers cannot handle fares or cash.
- Drivers cannot make change; however, the farebox will issue a change card.

**Maintenance of Accessible Features:**

- Monroe Transit will maintain in operative condition those features – including lifts, securement devices, signage, etc. – of facilities and vehicles that are required to make the vehicles and facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. [49 CFR 37.161 (a)]
- If an accessibility feature is damaged or out of order, it will be repaired promptly. [49 CFR 37.161 (b)] If the repair causes more than a temporary or isolated interruption, patrons who require use of those features while the feature is not usable will be reasonably accommodated by Monroe Transit. [49 CFR 37.161

**Lost & Found Procedure:**

Any article left on the bus will be stored at the MTS Lost & Found Department located at 700 Washington Street. Articles will be held for ten days. To claim a lost article, please call (318) 329-2506. Customers are responsible for claiming lost articles.

**Rider's Guide in Different Formats:**

The Rider's Guide is available for individuals with visual impairments. To request a different format rider's guide, please call our customer service representatives at (318) 329-2506.

**Contact Information**

From time to time, MTS will send information to its Paratransit customers, including recertification requests. MTS may also need to call customers for more trip information or to inform them of delays. Is it your responsibility to keep your phone number and mailing address up to date in our records. If your address or phone number changes, please inform the reservation agent that you are making a permanent change to your contact information.

**Suggestions, Comments & Complaints**

MTS seeks to provide its customers with safe, reliable, and customer-oriented service. We look forward to working with you to deliver the best possible service. If you have a suggestion, comment, or a complaint about our service, please call our Manager at (318) 329-2275 or write to:

**Monroe Transit  
Operations Manager  
700 Washington Street  
Monroe, LA. 71201**

Specific details will help MTS thoroughly address your suggestions, complaints, or comments expeditiously.

Please remember to include the following information when calling or writing to us.

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Location, Day, and time of experience, if applicable
- Vehicle number and/or driver's name/description, if applicable
- Reservation or service agent's name, if concerning a telephone conversation
- Explanation of incident, suggestion, or comment.

Complaints received by the Monroe Transit System will be forwarded to appropriate authorities for investigation. If the supervisor of the other information staff is unavailable, the call will go to voicemail, and a response will be provided as soon as possible. Complaints received by letter will be dated and answered within seven (7) working days. If the appropriate information is provided, the investigation will be completed within seven (7) days (excluding Saturdays and Sundays). The customer will be contacted by telephone and/or letter to advise you of receipt of the complaint.

If the investigation cannot be completed within (7) working days, the customer will be notified of the delay and advised when to expect a follow-up call to address their concern. MTS will retain copies of complaints for at least one year and a summary of all complaints for at least five years.

For specific Paratransit customer support services, you may call:

**Paratransit Information (318) 329-2506**

Customers may also write to MTS at:

**MTS Paratransit  
700 Washington Street  
Monroe, LA 71201**

### **Application Appeals Process**

1. Any person who is determined to be ineligible for ADA paratransit service will be allowed to appeal, in writing, within 60 days of the date of the ineligibility letter to [49 CFR 37.125(g)(1)]:

ADA Paratransit Eligibility Appeal  
Monroe Transit  
700 Washington Street  
Monroe, La 71201  
(318) 329-2868 (fax)

2. The time limit for appeals will be based on the date of receipt of the letter stating the reasons for a finding of ineligibility.
3. The individual should request an appeal in writing by stating that the decision not to certify was in error and giving reasons for this statement. They may also submit new evidence to support eligibility. Immediately upon receipt of such an appeal, Monroe Transit management will set a date for the hearing.
4. The date for the hearing of the appeal will be no later than twenty-one (21) days after the postmark date of the letter requesting the appeal.
5. Monroe Transit will provide the appellant transportation to and from the hearing upon request.
6. Monroe Transit will offer the individual who was denied eligibility every opportunity to present his/her case and receive and enter into the record every relevant piece of evidence and/or testimony from any person who can support him/her.
7. Monroe Transit will hear appeals. The individuals handling the appeal will be different from those who made the initial eligibility/ineligibility determination. The original reviewers of the application will not influence the appeals process.  
[49 CFR 37.125(g) (2)]
8. In all cases, determinations will be made in writing, and complete documentation will be retained.
9. Monroe Transit will make a final determination on the appeal as soon as possible after the hearing of the appeal. If, after 30 days, there is no decision on the appeal, the appellant shall be deemed eligible and may use the ADA paratransit service until the appeal is resolved.  
[49 CFR 37.125(g) (3)]

### **Additional ADA Information**

To support the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) goal of increasing outreach to consumers who have difficulty accessing public transportation, we have listed FTA toll-free numbers for our customers, advocates for people with disabilities, and the general public to call with concerns about public transit accessibility and related issues.

Federal Transit Administration  
1-888-446-4511

TDD/FIRS: 1-800-877-8339

Web Site:  
<http://www.fta.dot.gov>

