

Access Services

Applying for Access

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What is Access?

Access Services is a public transit agency dedicated to providing quality transportation for people with disabilities in Los Angeles County. Our services and programs are mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If you would like this document in an alternative accessible format, please contact Access Customer Service at [1.800.827.0829](tel:1.800.827.0829), TDD [1.800.827.1359](tel:1.800.827.1359)

Who is eligible for Access?

Eligibility for Access is based on a person's functional ability to use accessible buses and trains in Los Angeles County. This ability level is determined through an in-person transit evaluation. The evaluation looks at whether the person, without the help of anyone else can:

- > Get to and from the bus
- > Get on and off an accessible bus
- > Understand which bus to get on and when to get off the bus

Eligibility for our services is not based solely on disability, age, or medical diagnosis. Nor is it based on the perceived or real inconvenience of using public transportation, inexperience using the bus, or simply a desire not to use bus or rail service.

Tell me more.

- > Access is a curb-to-curb shared-ride service. This means several riders may ride in the same vehicle and riders must meet the vehicle at the curb instead of at their door.
- > Access is a "next day" service. This means you will need to call and make a reservation the day before you would like to ride.
- > Access is not a taxi service, emergency medical or social service transportation, or a private transportation service.
- > Access provides service within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on either side of fixed-route bus and rail lines in LA County.
- > Access operates on the same schedule as most buses. Regular service is offered from 4am to 12am daily, including Sundays.
- > As a shared ride service, your travel time will be similar to that of a fixed-route bus, rather than a car or taxi.
- > Your one-way fare is based on the distance you travel. Visit our website at asila.org for current fares.

IMPORTANT: Access may not be able to transport a wheelchair or mobility device larger than 30" wide and 48" long that weighs more than 600 lbs when occupied.

Do I have other transportation options besides Access?

Yes, you do. If you are able to use public transportation, there are many advantages to taking the bus and rail in Los Angeles County, including:

- > **Easy planning**
Transit operates on fixed schedules, so trips can be planned ahead or on the spur of the moment.
- > **Cost savings**
Transit is inexpensive, and some buses are even free. In addition, disabled and elderly riders are eligible for discounted fares, such as the countywide LACTOA card.

Federal law also requires that our public transit systems be accessible to you.

Buses and trains must have:

- > Lifts or ramps for anyone
- > Accessible stop request devices
- > Wheelchair securement spaces
- > Public address systems
- > Designated priority seating
- > Drivers announcing stops
- > Handrails and lighting
- > Drivers trained for sensitivity

For more information about bus/rail routes, stops, schedules and reduced fares in Los Angeles County, please visit metro.net or call **1.800.COMMUTE (266.6883) TDD 1.800.252.9040**. Metro offers convenient trip planning services online or by telephone.

Access also offers a service to help you find the transportation choice that's right for you:

> **Ride Information**

An Access specialist will provide you with information on public and private providers with accessible transportation options, including local dial-a-rides in Los Angeles County. Call **1.800.431.7882, (TDD 1.800.431.9731)** Monday - Friday, 8am to 5pm, and tell the RIDE INFO operator where your desired trip starts and ends. Describe any special accommodations you may need, such as a ramp to board the vehicle.

What do I do now?

- 1 Complete the **Access Services Transit Evaluation Information Sheet** on page 7 of this booklet. You will bring this form with you to your appointment. Do not mail the form to Access Services.
- 2 Call the Access Services Eligibility Center at **323.780.9777, TDD 323.780.9977** to schedule your in-person Transit Evaluation. Appointments are offered in English, Spanish and American Sign Language (with advance notice at scheduling). If you need other language assistance, please bring a translator with you to your appointment.

What do I need when I call?

- > Have the ID number shown on the address label ready.
- > Tell the Customer Service Representative if you will be using a mobility device such as a manual wheelchair, scooter or power wheelchair.
- > If you are able to provide your own transportation to the appointment, you can request a specific time when scheduling your appointment.
- > If you need a ride, Access will provide free transportation to and from your appointment.

If I request a ride from Access to my evaluation, what do I need to know?

- > Access is a curb-to-curb service, so the driver will not come to your door. You will need to be outside, waiting at the curb when your assigned vehicle arrives.
- > When you schedule your evaluation appointment, you will be given a morning or an afternoon appointment, but not a specific time. We'll call you the day before your appointment to remind you and provide pick-up and appointment times. If you don't receive a call by 8pm the day before your appointment, please call **1.800.827.0829**, and press **2** for assistance.
- > Plan on spending up to four hours for the evaluation process. This includes travel time, wait time, and evaluation time.

IMPORTANT: If you are unable to keep your appointment, please cancel as soon as possible by calling the Access Eligibility Center at 323.780.9777, TDD 323.780.9977. This helps us better serve all evaluation customers.

What can I expect at the evaluation center?

In order to qualify for Access, we need to determine your ability to use accessible bus and rail. Once you get to our evaluation center, a Transit Evaluator will ask you questions about using the bus, ask you to do some simple functional tests and observe your ability to get around. You may be asked to take a simulated walk to a bus stop. The actual evaluation may last up to 45 minutes.

What are you looking for at the evaluation center?

We want to see whether you can – with a reasonable level of effort – consistently:

- > Obtain and remember bus information
- > Walk or wheel to and from a bus or train stop/station over various surfaces and terrain, go up or down curbs, and negotiate curb-cuts and cross streets
- > Locate and recognize the appropriate bus or train
- > Ride a single route and multiple routes with transfers
- > Pay your fare when you board a bus or train
- > Get to a seat or securement area
- > Recognize your destination
- > Handle unexpected situations
- > Travel safely in the community

The evaluation will assess the following functional skills, which are needed to ride a bus or train:

- > Walking speed
- > Short and long-term memory
- > Endurance
- > Ability to seek and act on directions
- > Coordination
- > Ability to process information
- > Strength
- > Ability to communicate needs
- > Balance
- > Consistency
- > Range of motion
- > Behavioral skills
- > Dexterity
- > Proficiency in using mobility aids
- > Problem solving
- > Orientation to person, place and time
- > Coping skills

Make a note of your appointment:

Date

Time

Access pick-up time

Confirmation number

What else do I need to know about the evaluation process?

- 1 Again, please remember to bring the completed information sheet to your appointment.
- 2 You must bring a picture identification (for example: California ID, driver's license, passport, or other official government document) with you.
- 3 It is important for you to be able to explain what your disability is and how it prevents you from using the bus or rail. If you need assistance during the evaluation process, you are welcome to bring someone with you.
- 4 You are encouraged to bring documents to help explain or verify your disability (if you have a hidden disability you may be asked for this) such as:
 - > Letter from a doctor or therapist
 - > Letter from the Department of Rehabilitation
 - > Letter from a Regional Center or other recognized organizations
 - > Other documentation verifying your specific disability
 - > A list of current medications you take related to your disability
- 5 Bring the mobility device you normally travel with, such as a cane, walker, or wheelchair (manual or power).

What other resources are available to help me?

If you have a concern about what information you need or what to do to prepare for the transit evaluation, the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) has published an information guide called, "ADA Paratransit Eligibility: How to Make Your Case." You can get a copy of this helpful guide online at dredf.org or by calling Access Customer Service at **1.800.827.0829**.

When will you notify me as to whether I'm eligible for Access?

You will be notified by mail whether you are eligible for Access within 21 days from the date of your interview. If your eligibility is not processed within 21 days, we will allow you to use the service until you receive your notification.

What if I disagree with your evaluation decision?

If you disagree with the eligibility determination, you have the right to appeal our assessment within 60 days of the eligibility notice. Information on the appeal process will be sent to you with the eligibility determination.

Your Access Services information is here.

access

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