



Berkshire Regional Transit Authority

ADA Policies and Procedures

Revised 11/19

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Certification Process

In accordance with United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) implementing regulations, Berkshire Regional Transit Authority has developed a certification process designed to limit ADA paratransit eligibility to persons identified under Section 37.123 of the regulations. The Application for ADA Paratransit Eligibility contains questions about functional impairments or disabilities which will be utilized to determine eligibility. This determination may apply to all trip requests or it may be conditional based on the trip requested. The criteria for eligibility are described in the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority ADA Application.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority utilizes a self-certification process. The applicant completes an application form that requests basic transportation information. It includes simple questions about the applicant's ability to use accessible fixed-route transit. The form requests that the applicant provide the name of a licensed professional who can attest to the validity of the information.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority shall use its discretion to verify the information with the individuals listed in the application form. The applicant may be called in for a personal interview to verify eligibility. Eligibility screening will be given to anyone who requests it. Berkshire Regional Transit Authority will review all requests for eligibility and a determination of eligibility will be made within 21 days of receipt of a completed application or telephone interview. Incomplete paper applications will be promptly returned with the missing information noted.

The eligibility determination letter will explain any eligibility limitations or conditions. If the applicant is determined to be ineligible, the determination letter will state the reasons for the finding. All eligibility determination letters will contain information about appeals, allowing the applicant to exercise their appeal rights and informing them of any conditions relevant to appeals. If applicable, the letter will also contain information about use of the paratransit service and policies related to its use. Information will be provided, as appropriate, in an accessible format. In the event that the 21-day time period for eligibility determination is exceeded, the applicant will be presumed eligible until a formal notification is made.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for ADA certification a person must be unable to ride accessible fixed-route transit and must meet one or more of the following criteria:

Category 1: Individual's inability to use system

Any individual with a disability who is unable to use the system due to a physical or mental impairment. For example, if he/she is unable to:

- wait, either standing or seated, more than 15 minutes
- get on or off a lift-equipped vehicle without assistance grasp handles or railings
- maintain balance while seated on a moving vehicle
- identify the correct bus or stop
- understand transit directions needed to complete the trip

Category 2: Inaccessibility of the system

Any individual who can use an accessible system, but cannot do so when a portion of the system is not fully accessible. For example, the system is not considered fully accessible when:

- a lift cannot be deployed at the boarding/disembarking location the individual
- wishes to use a "common" wheelchair cannot be accommodated on the vehicle

Category 3: Individual's inability to get to the system

Any individual with a disability who has a condition which prevents them from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on an accessible transit system. For example:

- the individual's mobility impairment prevents traversing the terrain necessary to access the desired fixed-route service
- weather conditions interact with an impairment-related condition to prevent travel
- variations in the health/functional ability of the individual prevent travel
- individual's mobility impairment prevents travel beyond a certain distance, and the particular stop is beyond that threshold
- visual, cognitive or developmental impairment prevents travel to or from a stop for exceptional (non-routine) trips

Conditional Eligibility

Applicants meeting one or more of the above criteria would be eligible for ADA paratransit service. Because eligibility depends on a functional definition of disability as it applies to actual trips, applicants may only be eligible for ADA paratransit for specific trips. Such applicants are conditionally eligible for ADA paratransit service. When considering eligibility for specific trips, the three service categories of ADA eligibility summarized above will be used.

Presumptive and Reciprocal Eligibility

The right to complementary paratransit service under the ADA cannot be restricted by any tests other than the ability to utilize available fixed-route services. Residency in the service area or political jurisdiction of the transit system is not required for ADA eligibility. For out-of-area visitors in the BRTA service area, reciprocal eligibility will be provided to anyone with certification in another jurisdiction. The reservation operator may request information included on the individual's identification card and require that the card be presented to the driver to verify eligibility. For those out-of-area visitors who have not received eligibility status in their hometown, it is suggested that they apply for complementary paratransit service eligibility at least 21 days in advance of their trip to Berkshire County. By arranging for eligibility certification in advance, the visitor will be certain of their eligibility status and any conditions which may apply. They will also receive advance information about use of the service. While an advance application is suggested, Berkshire Regional Transit Authority will provide an expedited eligibility determination process for visitors. Temporary eligibility will be provided upon presentation by the visitor of documentation which indicates place of residence and, if the individual's disability is not apparent, documentation of his/her disability. A self-certification of disability will also be required. If a visitor expects to be in Berkshire County for more than 30 days or, if the individual is a frequent visitor and user of Berkshire Regional Transit services, BRTA may request that the individual establish local eligibility.

Minimum Age for ADA Paratransit

BRTA has not yet implemented a minimum age requirement for paratransit purposes. This policy will be updated when this change occurs.

List of Member Communities

Adams, Alford, Becket, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Dalton, Egremont, Florida, Great Barrington "Housatonic", Hinsdale, Lanesborough, Lee, Lenox, Monterey, Mt. Washington, North Adams, Otis, Peru, Pittsfield, Richmond, Savoy, Sheffield "Ashley Falls", Stockbridge, Washington, Williamstown, Windsor

Documentation

Every applicant that is approved for ADA certification shall be provided with an "ADA Paratransit Certified" picture identification as documentation of their eligibility.

ADA/Paratransit Appeals

Any person denied eligibility may appeal the decision, as well as appeal any trip conditions attached to a conditional eligibility determination. All appeals must be filed in writing within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the post mark on the envelope containing the eligibility notification letter. Applicants and certified users have access to an appeals process administered by Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). BRTA performs the eligibility determination internally. In order to have an appropriate separation of functions, members of the Appeals Panel will consist of individuals within the BRTA communities and/or BRTA employees not involved in the decision on the initial application. If a decision has not been made within thirty (30) days following the completion of the appeals process, the transportation entity must begin providing paratransit service to the individual. The transportation entity is not required to provide paratransit service to the individual at any time prior to the end of the thirty (30) day time period allotted for the review of the appeal.

Final decisions on all appeals shall be made by the Regional ADA Appeals Panel.

Written Appeals must be directed to the following address:

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority
c/o BRTA ADA Appeals Panel
1 Columbus Ave
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Trip denials or suspension from service are appealed directly with BRTA. All appeals must be filed within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of the service denial notification letter. Final decisions on appeals shall be made by the BRTA Appeals Panel.

Children on Paratransit

In accordance with MGL Chapter 90; Section 7AA: "No child under age 5 and no child weighing forty pounds or less shall ride as a passenger in a motor vehicle in any way unless such child is properly fastened and secured, according to the manufacturer's instructions, by a child passenger restraint as defined in section one."

Due to this law, passengers are currently unable to bring a child under the age of 5 or a child under forty (40) pounds on paratransit vehicles due to the inability to safely secure a child passenger restraint on said vehicle. Drivers are not permitted to lift or carry any children that are permitted to ride.

Service Animals

Service animals and service animals in-training are allowed on all Berkshire Regional Transit Authority vehicles and properties without being caged. All service animals must be certified in accordance to ADA regulations. Animals that are used for emotional support are not recognized as service animals under ADA guidelines and therefore do not qualify for this treatment. Berkshire Regional Transit Authority will transport other authorized service animals, provided they are properly constrained and do not pose a threat to other clients and/or the driver. Failure to control any animal may result in the client of the animal being requested to exit the vehicle.

Note: For safety reasons, drivers are not allowed to handle cages or handle service animals.

Caregiver Responsibility

Some clients may be mentally or cognitively impaired or have severe memory problems to the point that they may not be safely left to their own devices, either at the pick-up or drop-off locations. It is the responsibility of the client's caregivers or family member to clearly identify these clients to the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority so that appropriate precautions can be taken. However, the driver cannot act as an attendant for these clients. All clients may ride without an attendant provided they exhibit safe behavior in the vehicle. An attendant or caregiver must be present at both locations for clients who cannot be left to their own devices. If a responsible attendant or caregiver is not present when the driver arrives for the client, it can seriously disrupt the drivers schedule and cause delays for other passengers. When BRTA encounters absences of attendants or caregivers, service to the client may be suspended, and the matter may be reported to an appropriate state, county or local agency.

Caregivers and Social Service Agencies

This document was written for all clients and is phrased as if the client is reading the document. We know and understand that many caregivers will assume the responsibility of reading and understanding this information as well as making reservations and other arrangements for the client. However, if the client will be transported without an attendant, it is important that the client is aware of the rules and regulations, as well as be able to follow basic client responsibilities.

Personal Care Attendants

For the purpose of this policy, a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is defined as: Someone (employee, family member or friend) designated specifically to assist a client with a sensory, degenerative, physical and/or developmental disability meet their personal

needs. A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is meant to be someone whose services are required by the client. It is important to note that the need for a PCA does not restrict itself to ADA Paratransit needs. A PCA is often needed to assist with other activities of daily living, regarding challenges they may meet. Individuals may need a PCA for these activities but be fully capable of travelling with the assistance already provided by the driver. The need for PCA services may be intermittent or occasional and still be authorized. One PCA is authorized without fare; any additional travelers are considered guests and must pay an equal amount to that of the client. Paratransit operators can provide assistance to board, disembark and stow personal belongings, as well as provide door-to-door assistance as needed (case by case basis). A PCA must have the same origin and destination as the eligible client and are not charged a fare when accompanying an eligible client. A Paratransit operator may not assume the duties of a PCA. When scheduling the trip a spot must be reserved for the PCA to ensure space on the vehicle. Under certain circumstances Berkshire Regional Transit Authority may strongly recommend a PCA for clients who display behavior or physical difficulty to such an extent that it impacts general safety. At the time of certification (or, if applicable, later) clients are required to notify the BRTA ADA Certification Office if they must travel with an attendant and will be reminded to bring one along when a reservation is made. The same is true of service animals.

Companions

A companion is a friend, relative, or other person who is travelling with the client, but is not coming along as a PCA. When making a reservation, the client must notify the booking agent that a guest is planned to accompany the client on their trip. Companions must pay the same rate as the client. There is a maximum of one (1) companion allowed, in addition to one (1) PCA.

Transporting Bags/Packages

Each paying client is allowed up to three (3) packages (plastic grocery or shopping bags). PCA's are not eligible to carry additional bags. Clients should make other arrangements for additional bags/packages exceeding three (3) parcels. Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated. Clients may be required to secure packages at their seats, as storage space can be limited. The maximum combined weight of all packages cannot exceed thirty (30) pounds. Drivers can only load a maximum of three (3) bags and are not required to transport packages to and/or from the vehicle. Clients are encouraged to use a safe and efficient means of transporting bags/packages.

Note: For safety reasons clients may not transport more bags/packages than they can manage for themselves.

Fares

To receive service, a valid BRTA ADA ticket must be presented to the driver for each community traveled. Clients and their guests must pay a fare, but PCA's travel at no charge. The tickets presented must equal the required payment for that specific trip. ADA tickets must be purchased in advance at the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority, 1 Columbus Ave, Pittsfield MA 01201. Cash fares are not accepted for BRTA ADA service.

Service Area

Clients/qualified registrants are not entitled to service outside of the defined service area and/or the jurisdictional boundaries. ADA/Paratransit service operates during the same days and hours as BRTA fixed-route bus service; 5:45am-7:20pm weekdays and 5:45am-7:20pm on Saturdays. There is no service on Sundays and the following national holidays.

Holidays: New Year's
 Martin Luther King Day
 Memorial Day
 Independence Day
 Labor Day
 Columbus Day
 Veteran's Day
 Thanksgiving
 Christmas

The service area extends $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile beyond the fixed-route service. Points of origin and destination not within the $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile corridor are ineligible for ADA Paratransit service. A trip may require more than one-hour from origin to destination due to the size of BRTA's service area. However, we are committed to providing trips that are not excessive in length (time) and have adopted the standard that no trips will be more than twice the length (time) of comparable BRTA fixed-route service, including travel, transfers and wait times.

Scheduling

ADA Paratransit reservations can be accepted as far in advance as fourteen (14) days, between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday-Saturday, excluding holidays, up to one day before the requested date, at (413)499-2782 ext. 3.

Please have the following information available when making a reservation:

- Client name

- The exact street address (origin and destination)
- Names of complexes or subdivisions, as well as building, apartment, or suite numbers, as well as doctor's names when more than one doctor is present at the intended location
- Easily identified pick-up points should be communicated when applicable
- The appointment time, or time requested to arrive at destination, as well as time requested for pick-up upon return. Remember to indicate if the client is traveling with a PCA, guest, or service animal.
- Return trip information

Reservation agents will route and schedule each trip request made within three (3) days at the time the reservation is made. All trips must have a minimum of thirty (30) minutes between the drop-off and the following pick-up. Ride confirmation and "ready times" will be given to the client when applicable. When at capacity, alternative times and/or days may be negotiated, or the trip may be denied. **Clients should expect the transit vehicle within twenty (20) minutes of the negotiated "ready time" (fifteen (15) minutes before and five (5) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time) and must board the vehicle within five (5) minutes of arrival. A delay by the client in boarding more than five (5) minutes after the "ready time" may result in a no-show.** Every effort will be made to accommodate the requested trip(s), however, please be aware that at times the requested trip(s) may not be available. In those instances where demand goes beyond the available service, the ADA contractor reservation agent will attempt to provide the client with an alternate time as close to the original requested time as possible. Trip negotiations are permissible under ADA guidelines. Clients requesting a specific time that is not available will be offered a time nearest to the requested time within one (1) hour before and one (1) hour after the requested time. If the client refuses a trip provided within those time constraints, the declined trip will be considered a trip refusal. A client may still accept a time that is more than one (1) hour from the requested time. All passengers have the right to reject an alternative trip time. Provided there is a working phone number associated with the client's ADA profile, the client will receive an automated phone call the night before the trip with the scheduled times. These times are subject to change due to events beyond the control of the BRTA. The ADA service provider will call, when practical, in cases where the vehicle is delayed fifteen (15) minutes or more to inform the client of the delay and estimate the time the vehicle will arrive after attempting to dispatch another vehicle. If a client gets a late trip and requires additional time, the client may call to request a later return trip and the trip will not be charged as a no-show. Berkshire Regional Transit Authority clients may call at any time to ask for an estimated time of arrival (ETA). To get specific information on when the scheduled vehicle is expected to arrive call (413)499-2782 ext. 3. Please try to limit calls to when the vehicle is more than 15 minutes late, because excessive calls requesting the clients ETA can overwhelm the phone system. Please remember the client is responsible for making arrangements for the vehicle to gain access to gated communities or secured complexes. A driver cannot be delayed due to difficulty in accessing the requested area.

Reminder to Riders Regarding Extreme Weather

Occasionally, it may be necessary to take ADA Paratransit service off the road due to extreme weather such as snowstorms. Every attempt will be made to keep service on the road for as long as it is safe to drive the vehicles. The BRTA will make every effort to avoid leaving any individual stranded during inclement weather. During inclement weather, please consider the importance of the trip, as well as potentially worsening weather conditions, before leaving home.

When inclement weather is in the forecast, Berkshire Regional Transit Authority services are subject to change as conditions demand. While forecasted temperatures and snow accumulations guide our preparations, the actual intensity of the storm and road conditions will dictate the level of service we can safely provide and/or restore.

During inclement weather of any kind, passengers should expect delays. Information will be made available to the public regarding any change in BRTA service levels.

If ADA Paratransit service has been taken off the road, riders are responsible for arranging their own alternative transportation for critical trips (such as medical treatments or work).

For further information please refer to the BRTA'S Storm Service Policy

Advanced and Subscription Reservation Service

ADA Paratransit reservations can be made as far in advance as fourteen (14) days, between 8:00AM and 5:00PM Monday-Saturday, excluding holidays, up to one day before the ride date, at (413) 499-2782 ext. 3.

Subscription Service is offered to Berkshire Regional Transit Authority customers who have travel patterns to and from the same destinations, during the same days and hours, at least once per week. Individuals who have schedules or locations that frequently change are not eligible for subscription service. Subscription service is offered Monday-Saturday. Once a subscription request is approved the client does not have to make any further reservation calls pertaining to that trip, except to cancel any trip the client does not plan to take. Unfortunately, same day changes cannot be accommodated. Subscription service is offered as a convenience to our clients and is not required under ADA. Availability is based on a first come/first served basis and certain restrictions may apply due to capacity constraints. At no time can subscription service reservations exceed 50% of scheduled trips.

Note: Same day reservations cannot be accommodated.

Changing a Reservation

All changes to reservations must be made prior to 5:00PM one business day before the ride date. Same day changes cannot be accommodated. Please do not ask drivers to make changes, such as dropping the client at a different address. Drivers are not authorized to make any changes to the trips that are assigned.

Capacity Constraints

When a reservation is made, clients may be notified if excessive demand exists for the requested trip time, and an alternative time may be negotiated. Problems attributed to causes beyond the control of Berkshire Regional Transit Authority shall not be basis for determination of a pattern of capacity constraints.

Cancellations, Lateness and “No Shows”

Clients are requested to cancel unwanted trips at least three (3) hours in advance. Any trips not cancelled within two (2) hours of the scheduled trip time shall be considered a “no-show”. Clients not at the designated pick-up location or clients who fail to board the vehicle in a timely manner will be considered a “no-show” as well. A documented pattern of “no-shows” or lateness for reasons within the client’s control may result in service denial on a long-term basis. (See Policy on Suspension of Service below.)

Wheelchairs, Scooters, Lift and Securement Use

BRTA ADA Paratransit will transport clients whose wheelchairs meet the ADA-regulated definition of a common wheelchair. As defined by the ADA, a common wheelchair is a wheelchair or other mobility device that does not exceed thirty (30) inches in width, forty-eight (48) inches in length and that does not exceed a total weight of six hundred (600) pounds when occupied. Wheelchairs and their users must be secured at all times during boarding, transport and disembarking operations. Scooter-type devices have been shown to be unstable on wheelchair lifts as well as inside the vehicle. These devices may, at times, exceed the weight and ADA allowed dimensions. Clients travelling with scooters must adhere to the same safety procedures as those for wheelchairs. Clients using a scooter-type device are encouraged to transfer to a vehicle seat if possible. All clients using any type of mobility device must be secured at all times using a four-point tie down system when riding in the vehicle. Failure to adhere to all safety related policies may result in loss of service. All mobility devices are strongly encouraged to back on to the wheelchair lift as prescribed by the manufacturer.

Note: Berkshire Regional Transit Authority cannot transport clients with inoperative mobility devices.

Ambulatory Clients Accessing Lift for Vehicle Boarding

All ambulatory clients may request to use the lift for boarding at any time. Clients will be required to stand without assistance and hold onto the handrails.

Medication and Transporting Other Life-Support Equipment

Clients may travel with any life-support related equipment, provided that such transport does not violate laws or rules pertaining to transportation of hazardous materials, and that said equipment is able to be properly and safely secured. Clients using such equipment are advised to use medical transportation and/or travel with a personal care attendant. Clients requiring medication or oxygen at regular intervals should be aware that travel time on ADA Paratransit vehicles can be up to twice the length (time) of comparable BRTA fixed-route service, including travel, transfers and wait times. Rides are subject to delays that result in the client's on-board time being longer than sixty (60) minutes. Public transportation is subject to unpredictable conditions such as traffic, weather, or mechanical problems.

Note: BRTA ADA Paratransit personnel cannot be held responsible for administration of medications. The administration of medications or oxygen when in a BRTA ADA Paratransit vehicle is the client's responsibility. If assistance is required, the client must travel with a PCA. Should the administration of medications or oxygen be necessary while on the vehicle, BRTA ADA Paratransit personnel will contact emergency medical services (911) to administer the medication at the client's expense, as well as any time a client requires immediate medical attention. Repeated incidents requiring administration of oxygen or medication which cause disruption/delay for other Berkshire Regional Transit Authority clients may result in the evaluation of the individual's suitability to use the ADA Paratransit service.

Accessible Origins and Destinations

In accordance with FTA 56 FR 45604 and/or 49CFR 37.129(a): Where the local planning process establishes curb-to-curb service as the basic paratransit service mode, however, provision should still be made to ensure that the service available to each passenger actually gets the passenger from his or her point of origin to his or her destination point. To meet this origin to destination requirement, service may need to be provided to some individuals, or at some locations, in a way that goes beyond curb-to-curb service.

BRTA established curb to curb as the basic mode of paratransit service. This is identified as "curb service from origin to destination." This does not restrict passengers to curb service only. Consistent with origin to destination service, BRTA regularly

provides greater than curb service on a case by case basis. In these instances, door to door service is NOT considered enhanced service but an accommodation, and is considered ADA general service and NOT Premium Service. BRTA does NOT charge additional for this accommodation as it is based on passenger need rather than request for convenience.

Similarly, BRTA routinely extends its basic curb to curb service when client's mobility is limited and prevents them from getting to the curb of either the origin or destination. This is typically determined with input from the client during, or after, the ADA eligibility process, or by request of BRTA ADA Paratransit operators.

Service to inaccessible locations will be provided at the nearest curb or safe access location. In these situations, a personal care attendant is strongly advised if additional assistance is required. In order to provide safe and timely service, the client must provide a specific designated location for drop-off and pick-up. Berkshire Regional Transit Authority has developed the following procedures to ensure safe vehicle movement and standardized connecting point guidelines:

Clients living in multiple unit apartment complexes must meet the vehicle at the curb nearest the client's unit address, or the curb closest to the main lobby/centralized building, unless instructed otherwise. If the complex is inaccessible to BRTA ADA Paratransit vehicles, the client must meet the vehicle at the main entrance of the complex. Before BRTA ADA Paratransit vehicles can enter any hard to access locations, the location must be inspected by a supervisor, or senior transit personnel. If the facility has a guarded gate or limited access, it is the client's responsibility to inform security staff of the scheduled pick-up and return times. The client is required to make BRTA ADA Paratransit aware of any security procedures or access codes when making a reservation, and arrangements must be made to provide access for the vehicle. BRTA ADA Paratransit operators cannot be delayed due to complicated access requirements. When travelling from a large office complex or medical facility must meet the vehicle at the curb closest to the main lobby entrance, or other specifically designated areas. BRTA ADA Paratransit is committed to arriving within the scheduled pick-up/ready window. If the client is not at the designated pick-up location and the five (5) minute grace period has expired, the vehicle will depart, and the client will be declared a "no-show". Out of courtesy for other clients who may be on the vehicle, the driver can wait no longer than the aforementioned five (5) minute grace period. BRTA ADA Paratransit dispatchers are not required to call the client by telephone to inform of the vehicle arrival. However, BRTA ADA Paratransit dispatchers will call any sight or hearing-impaired clients to notify of vehicle arrival. It is the client's responsibility to be at the curb or within viewing distance of the driver when the vehicle arrives. Please note that BRTA ADA Paratransit operators cannot wait while clients conduct business at the destination.

Access to Information About Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Services

This information will be made available in accessible formats as necessary to enable users to understand BRTA's services and policies. Applicable policies will be reviewed when reservations are made.

Lost & Found Articles

Lost & Found property is stored in a secure area to maintain accountability, safekeeping and security. Every reasonable effort is made to keep the property in the same condition in which it was recovered. Items may be returned in a manner deemed secure or picked up upon request. Articles will be held for ten (10) days. To claim a lost article, please call (413) 499-2782 ext. 3. Clients are responsible for claiming lost items.

Prohibiting Disruptive Behavior

Clients are expected to behave in a safe and proper manner. Service will be immediately denied on a long-term basis to any client who engages in violent, disruptive, or illegal behavior. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: threats or fear of physical or verbal abuse, unlawful harassment; including unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations; unauthorized use of equipment on the vehicle, voluntarily and repeatedly violating riding rules; including smoking on the vehicle, not wearing a seatbelt, standing while the vehicle is in motion, eating or drinking on the vehicle, or defacing property and/or equipment; refusing to comply with other requirements specified in the BRTA ADA Paratransit policies, or providing false information in order to qualify for ADA certification.

Note: The use of drugs or alcohol, or riding under the influence of intoxicating substances, is prohibited at all times on board the vehicle.

Suspension of Service

Clients must not engage in activities which misuse the system, unnecessarily using capacity that could otherwise go to clients who need transportation and increase BRTA's service costs. Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to, failing to show up for scheduled rides, providing late cancellation notice (no-shows), or failing to board the vehicle immediately upon arrival (lateness). Any documented pattern within any thirty (30) day period (from the most recent violation) or misuse of system capacity within the client's control can be grounds for suspension. A sudden personal emergency, sudden or worsening illness, inability to reach BRTA phone lines, or a late

driver shall not be considered within the client's control. Clients will be provided the opportunity to explain each occurrence in a call or letter initiated by the BRTA. After the fourth (4th) incident the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority will issue a written warning notice that the next violation may result in a suspension of service. Upon the fifth (5th) occurrence the BRTA ADA Paratransit will review all trips from the previous thirty (30) days. If, during that time period, the percentage of "no-shows" exceeds 20%, the client may receive notice of suspension of service. Prior to any suspension, a written warning of the proposed suspension period and the reason(s) for the suspension will be provided to the client. Clients who appeal the proposed suspension, within the designated time frame, may continue to ride pending a decision on the appeal. (See Policy on Appeals above.)

Suspension for Untimely Cancellation Notice, "No-Shows" and Lateness

First (1st) Suspension: Seven (7) days

Second (2nd) Suspension: Fourteen (14) days

Third (3rd) (and subsequent) Suspension(s): Thirty (30) days

Trip denials or suspensions from service are appealed directly with BRTA. All appeals must be filed within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of the service denial notification letter. Final decisions on appeals will be made by:

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Management

Written appeals must be directed to the following address:

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority
c/o Appeals Review
1 Columbus Ave
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nondiscrimination and ADA Notice

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority prides itself on ensuring the transit program is administered and provided free of discrimination to all employees, job applicants, and program participants and applicants. Berkshire Regional Transit Authority does not discriminate against any person because of sex, age, race, creed, color, disability, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, political affiliation or belief, or heritage. Furthermore, the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority specifically prohibits all forms of sexual and other unlawful harassment within BRTA.

Suggestions, Comments & Complaints

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority seeks to provide its clients with safe, reliable, and customer-friendly service. We look forward to working with you to provide the best service possible. If you have a suggestion, comment or a complaint about our services, please call our **Administrator** at (413) 499-2782 or write to:

**Berkshire Regional Transit Authority
1 Columbus Avenue
Pittsfield, MA 01201**

Specific details will help us thoroughly address your suggestions, comments or complaints in an expeditious fashion.

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
- Dispatch / reservation agent's name, if concerning a telephone conversation
- Explanation of incident, suggestion, or comment.

Complaints received by Berkshire Regional Transit Authority will be logged and numbered. They will be processed and forwarded to the appropriate authorities for investigation. If the supervisor or other support staff is not available, the call will go to voice mail and a response will be provided by the next business day. Complaints received by letter will be dated and answered in seven (7) working days. If the appropriate information is provided, the investigation will be completed within seven (7) working days.