

GCT ACCESS SAME DAY CANCELLATION AND NO-SHOW POLICY



EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2010

Purpose

GC ACCESS' mission is to provide origin to destination paratransit service to our customers while complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations for paratransit services. To encourage responsible trip scheduling and use, the ADA allows public transit systems to establish and enforce a Late Cancellation and No-Show policy. The No-Show and Cancellation policies and procedures for GC ACCESS were developed in accordance with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidelines for ADA complementary paratransit service. GC ACCESS service is important to the passengers we serve. The purpose of the policy and procedure is to monitor and address the negative impact of customer no-shows on GC ACCESS' ability to perform its mission.

Policy

It is the policy of Gold Coast Transit for GC ACCESS to record each customer's no-shows and/or late cancellations and apply appropriate sanctions when customers establish a pattern or practice of excessive No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations. The policy is necessary in order to recognize the negative impact No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations have on the service provided to other passengers.

Procedures

Scheduling Trips:

GC ACCESS schedules pick-up and return trips separately. In accordance with FTA regulations, GC ACCESS assumes all scheduled return trips are needed unless notice is given by the passenger or their representative. If you NO-SHOW your first trip of the day, GC ACCESS **will not automatically cancel your subsequent trips of the day**. This is consistent with FTA regulations. If, however, you do not need the subsequent trip(s), please cancel them as soon as possible out of courtesy for other riders.

Please note: For the safety and security of passengers, all calls are recorded. The ability to audit for the accuracy of staff's response to trip request and the resulting negotiated wait windows for customers has been greatly improved.

Definitions:

No-show

If a customer fails to board the vehicle within 5 minutes of the arrival of the vehicle, as long as the driver arrives within the pick-up window, the customer will be charged with a No-Show. A No-Show occurs when:

- There has been no call by the customer (or the customer's representative) to cancel the scheduled trip time.
AND
- The vehicle arrives at the scheduled location within the 20 minute window
AND
- ACCESS notifies **or** attempts to notify the customer that they have arrived.
AND
- The operator cannot reasonably see the customer approaching the vehicle after waiting five minutes.
AND
- The Dispatch office is notified. At this time, Dispatch will verify that the operator is at the correct location using the Automated Vehicle Location System information.

A No-Show may also be charged when:

- The driver arrives and you cancel your ride.
- You arrive to take the ride as the driver is leaving.

If the passenger No-Shows at their home, the passenger should expect to find a door hanger that indicates that the driver was there to provide a trip for them. Each No-Show recorded by GC ACCESS will generate a post card that is mailed to the passenger's home the next business day. If the passenger feels that the No-Show should be excused, they should contact GC ACCESS at the regular phone number as soon as possible.

Late Cancellation

A Late Cancellation occurs when a passenger cancels a trip less than three hours before the scheduled trip. **When a trip is cancelled within three hours of the scheduled window**, it deprives other passengers of same day opportunities, taking away the ability to serve a greater number of passengers. **The three hour window** takes into account the daily requests for trips into the more difficult to reach Ojai Valley area as well as the additional coordination efforts required to serve the transfer point for passengers who need transportation on other paratransit providers beyond the service area.

Note:

Trips cancelled less than three hours before their window or that are No-Showed by the passenger for reasons that are beyond the passengers control will not be considered as No-Shows. They will be excused. Examples would include but are

not limited to: illness, accidents, family emergency and bus arrival more than 15 minutes past the scheduled pick up window. However, repeated failures (6 trips per month) to take scheduled trips, regardless of the reason, are subject for review.

Trips can be canceled 24 hours a day by calling the regular GC ACCESS phone number.

Excused No-Shows/Late Cancellations

No-Shows or Late Cancellations are **excused** when the trip is missed for one of the following reasons:

- The customer is **SICK**
- **FAMILY** emergency: Death or illness of family member or other family emergency.
- **MOBILITY AID** failed.
- **LATE** connecting transportation: late transfer trip, train, etc. caused the customer to miss the trip.
- **APPOINTMENT CANCELLED/DELAYED** for reasons that are not the customer's fault.
- **ACTS OF GOD:** Flood, earthquake, etc.
- **STAFFING ERROR:** Staff did not note the cancellation request or passenger just realized that staff scheduled the trip inconsistently with the passenger's request.

No-Shows/Late Cancellations that are not excused

No-Shows or Late Cancellations are **not excused** when the trip is missed for one of the following reasons:

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

Pattern or Practice of Excessive No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations

A pattern or practice involves intentional, repeated or regular actions that are not isolated, accidental or singular incidents. All passenger records will be reviewed on the last business day of the month to determine if any passenger will be subject to possible sanctions.

Calculation Method to Determine No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations

At the end of each month, each passenger's trip requests will be reviewed to identify those passengers whose No-Show/Late Cancellation rate is 10.00% or more. Excused occurrences are **not** part of the calculation. The rate will be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(\text{No-Shows} + \text{Late Cancellations})}{(\text{Total Trips Requested} - \text{Early Cancellations})} = \text{Passenger's No-Show/Late Cancellation rate}$$

Sanction for Excessive No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations

GC ACCESS wants our customers to take the trips they request. However, repeated failures (6 trips per month) to take trips as scheduled, regardless of the reason, are subject for review.

If you No-Show and/or Late Cancel 10% or more of your trips in a calendar month, you will be notified in writing of a requirement to confirm your next four one-way trips (or 2 round trips). If during the subsequent calendar month you No-Show and/or Late Cancel 10% or more of your trips again, you will be required to confirm your next eight one-way trips (or 4 round trips).

Sanctions will be imposed no sooner than seven days after the notice has been mailed. The notice will include the start date for the sanctions. When you reserve your trips, the reservations staff will remind you to confirm your trip the next day and that failure to do so will result in your trips being automatically cancelled. If GC ACCESS does not receive a confirmation call from you within an hour of the start of the pick up window, both legs of the trip will be cancelled. The sanction will be lifted once the required confirmation calls have been completed.

If the pattern of excessive No-Shows and/or Late Cancellations continues to a third consecutive month, GC ACCESS will temporarily suspend service to you for a period of up to seven calendar days. Before GC ACCESS temporarily suspends service, the passenger will be notified and provided ample opportunity (not to exceed 30 calendar days) to make alternate arrangements.

5 Minute Grace Period

GC ACCESS provides origin to destination paratransit services. This means you should be ready to board the vehicle at the beginning of your window. The five minute grace period is not intended to allow for extra time to grab your coat, etc. To assist as many customers as possible, the schedule does not include a 5 minute grace period at each pick up. It is assumed that customers will be ready to travel. Customers must be ready to depart at any time during the twenty minute window. If a customer has not boarded the vehicle within the five-minute grace period, the vehicle will depart. The dispatcher will not necessarily be able to call the customer to advise that the vehicle has arrived. It is the customer's responsibility to be ready and prepared to board when the vehicle arrives. If the passenger arrives to take the vehicle as the bus is departing, the passenger may still be assessed for a no-show.

Out of courtesy for other customers who are scheduled on the same vehicle, the driver will wait no longer than a five (5) minute grace period.

Bus Driver Protocols:

When the driver arrives within the window, the driver signals dispatch of the arrival by using their Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) unit. The MDT automatically starts a dwell timer. The MDT's are programmed to allow a no-show request 30 seconds after arrival. If the driver has not made visual contact with the passenger after 30 seconds, he/she will make a no-show request through the MDT.

1. The dispatcher will be alerted of the no-show request.
2. The dispatcher has immediate access to the passenger's trip information as well as the rest of the passenger's travel itinerary for that day and passenger contact information.
3. The dispatcher when they are able makes a call to the appropriate phone number in an attempt to inform the client of the bus arrival. The dispatcher is able to make this call most (approximately 95%) of the time. Although the dispatch is able to call most of the time, this does not remove the passenger's responsibility to be ready to board the vehicle at the beginning of their pick up window, to be in a location where they can see the vehicle and signal to the driver.
4. The dispatcher also evaluates each situation to determine the following:
 - Is the driver at the correct address?
 - Has this driver picked up at this address before?
 - On return trips, the drop off driver that delivered the client may be contacted to verify the location the vehicle is at is, in fact, where the passenger was dropped off.
 - The vehicle's Automated Vehicle Location system (AVL) may be accessed remotely by the dispatcher to determine the location of the vehicle in relation to the system map.

- The waiting driver might be asked to provide his/her exact loading location through the description of landmarks.
5. The driver will inform dispatch if they have not made contact with their passenger five minutes after they arrive at the pick up location.
 6. The dispatcher will direct the driver to proceed on route to the next stop and record a no-show on the record.
 - Dispatch has the prerogative to evaluate each situation to determine if a wait of longer than five minutes is available for the route to allow the client to arrive without making other customers late.

Passenger Information

Each time a passenger No-Shows or Late Cancels their trip, a post card will be sent to their mailing address. The passenger (or their representative) is encouraged to call, especially if the occurrence should be considered excused.

If a passenger is subject to sanction, the passenger will be sent by the fifth day of the month, a letter notifying him/her of the sanction and what it means. The letter will provide a summary of the verified occurrences and information about appeals in the instances ***when service will be suspended.***

SUSPENSION OF SERVICE APPEALS PROCESS:

Individuals may appeal a suspension decision by notifying the GCT Paratransit & Special Projects Manager in writing at 301 E Third Street, Oxnard, CA 93030. GCT will contact the individual within two working days of receiving the written notification to schedule a meeting time to hear the appeal.

GCT ACCESS service shall be provided to the individual during the time that the appeal date is being determined, to attend the appeal hearing, and until the appeal is resolved. If the person refuses to attend the appeal hearing, GCT ACCESS service shall be suspended until either an appeals hearing is completed, or for 30 days, whichever is shorter.