



PARATRANSIT RIDER'S GUIDE

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Cobb County DOT Transit Division
463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 112, Marietta, GA 30060

Welcome to CobbLinc Paratransit Services

This Rider's Guide was developed to help new and existing customers become familiar with CobbLinc's Paratransit Service. It includes detailed information on how to apply for and use Paratransit Service.

This document is available in a video format with audio and subtitles for hearing and/or visually impaired persons on the CobbLinc website (www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/paratransit).

If you have questions about any of the information contained in this guide and/or need to request the guide or applications in alternate formats, contact the Transit Operations Monitor at (770) 528-3690, TDD 711.

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Definitions

ADA – The Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, is a federal law that guarantees people with disabilities full and equal access to the same services and accommodations available to people without disabilities. Under the ADA, public buses that run on regular schedules along specific routes (called Fixed Route service) must be accessible to people with disabilities. When Fixed Route service is not accessible, or when a passenger with a disability is not able to use the Fixed Route system, ADA mandates that transit systems operate paratransit service.

Denials – A refusal to satisfy a request. An application for Paratransit service may be denied based on eligibility factors.

On-Time Performance – Drivers are allowed to wait 5 minutes within the on-time pick up window defined as being 15 minutes prior to the appointment time or 15 minutes after the appointment time.

Long Trips – Most trips within our service area can take up to 60 minutes to reach a destination. The time to reach a destination may vary due to unusual traffic conditions or in climate weather. Long trips are in excess of 1.5 hours depending on miles of travel.

1 ABOUT COBBLINC'S PARATRANSIT SERVICE

CobbLinc's Paratransit Service is a shared-ride, curb-to-curb service for customers with disabilities who are not able to use the regular bus service (also called "fixed route") for some or all of their trips because of a disability or other limitations. CobbLinc provides Paratransit Service through a contract with First Transit, Inc., but monitors and oversees all aspects of the service.

Customers are picked up at the closest curb to the pick-up location and are taken to the closest curb of the drop-off location. Individuals must be eligible for this service under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA customers are not required to state the purpose of each trip and may travel anywhere within a three-quarter (3/4) mile radius from a regular bus route.

Because this is a shared-ride service, the paratransit vehicle may stop to let other customers on or off before reaching the final destination. As such, **paratransit trip times may be as long as a comparable fixed route trip plus an additional one-half (1/2) hour for travel and/or wait time.**

1.1 Hours/Days of Operation

Paratransit service is provided Monday through Sunday and the daily operating hours are comparable to CobbLinc's local bus service hours. For instance, if you want to travel to a location with a 3/4 of a mile area of the Route 10, paratransit service would be available from 5:00 am to 1:00 am during the week, 6:00 am to 1:00 am on Saturday, and 7:00 am to 12:00 am on Sundays.

However, if you use CobbLinc paratransit service to travel to a location within 3/4 of a mile area of the Express Route 100, which services portions of downtown Atlanta, paratransit service would be available from 5:25 am to 9:00 am and from 3:25 pm to 7:30 pm during weekdays only because Express Routes do not run on weekends.

If you have questions regarding service hours, please call Customer Service at (770) 427-4444, TDD 711.

Paratransit service, including subscription services, is not available on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

1.2 Paratransit Service Area

The service area for CobbLinc's Paratransit Service covers a three-quarter ($\frac{3}{4}$) mile radius around the existing local bus routes in Cobb County and limited areas in Fulton County. A map of the Paratransit Service Area is provided on the last page of this guide.

Points of origin and destination outside the three-quarter ($\frac{3}{4}$) mile corridor are not eligible for CobbLinc Paratransit service. Eligible passengers are not required to live inside the service area; however, passengers must board and exit the paratransit vehicle inside of the service area at a safe transfer location.

1.3 Transportation Voucher Program

The CobbLinc Transportation Voucher Program (TVP) assists elderly and disabled Cobb County residents living *outside* the paratransit service area in paying for private transportation services. To see if you are eligible for the program, you must complete the Paratransit certification process (see section 3.2). You will be notified in writing if you reside outside of the Paratransit Service area and are eligible for the program.

For more information, visit www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/Paratransit.

1.4 Lost and Found

Any article left on a vehicle will be held for 30 days at the CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center. To inquire about a lost article, call Customer Service at (770) 427-4444, TDD 711. To claim an item, passengers must visit the CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center located at 431 Commerce Park Drive, Marietta, GA. Identification will be required.

1.5 Paratransit Fare

The current one-way fare for paratransit service is **\$4.00 for adults** and **\$3.00 for youth customers**. Companions pay the same fare as the customer. Personal Care Attendants

(PCA) travel free, but the need for a PCA must have been established during the customer's initial paratransit certification process.

1.5.1 Fare Payment

Fares may be paid with a Paratransit Breeze Card, exact cash (operators cannot make change), paratransit monthly pass, paratransit single-ride ticket, or paratransit 10-ride ticket upon boarding. Fares will be collected in the fare box at the front of the vehicle. Customers are required to show their CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID to use the service.

1.5.2 Purchasing Breeze Card and CobbLinc Fare Products

Breeze Cards, tickets, and CobbLinc fare products may be purchased in person Monday through Friday at the Customer Service & Paratransit Center located at 431 Commerce Park Drive, Marietta, GA during normal business hours. Accepted forms of payment include personal checks, money orders, or cash. Debit cards and some credit cards can be used at this location. American Express and Discover Card are not accepted.

Credit card purchases may also be made by calling (770) 428-1218, TDD 711 or by visiting www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc (use the "Buy a Bus Pass" icon).

There is a no refund policy on all purchases. CobbLinc cannot replace tickets lost in the mail or stolen. Tickets should be kept in a safe place. Operators do not handle the purchase of passes, tickets, or specialty fares.

1.6 Transfers

CobbLinc Paratransit to/from MARTA Mobility	MARTA Mobility Fare applies
CobbLinc local route to CobbLinc Paratransit	\$4.00 fare charged
CobbLinc Express route to CobbLinc Paratransit	Free when using a Breeze Card
MARTA to CobbLinc Paratransit	Up-charge applies
MARTA (bus/rail) to CobbLinc local routes	Free when using a Breeze Card

2 ABOUT FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE

Many customers with disabilities find the fixed-route bus service is often the best and most economical way to meet their transportation needs.

The term “fixed-route” system means a system of providing designated public transportation on which a vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule. CobbLinc fixed-route bus schedules are available online at www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/routes-and-schedules.

Using CobbLinc’s fixed-route service means greater independence and same-day travel. No need to call in advance to reserve a trip. The buses run on a regular schedule and customers may ride when they like. Time points for each route are listed on the route schedule.

Passengers who are certified through CobbLinc for Paratransit Service and their Personal Care Attendant ride the fixed-route buses *free of charge*. To plan your trip on the fixed route, call 770-427-4444 and a customer service agent will help you identify the best route to reach your destination.

For more information about CobbLinc’s fares, tickets and passes, please visit us at: www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/fares-and-transfers.

2.1 Vehicle Equipment and Stop Information

All of CobbLinc’s fixed-route buses are equipped with wheelchair ramps, automatic voice enunciators that announce the next stop, and next-stop signs that provide passengers with the location of the next stop on an LED display. In addition, all CobbLinc fixed-route buses have the capacity to kneel, bringing the first step on the bus closer to the ground.

2.2 Fixed-Route Reduced Fare Program

The fixed-route reduced fare program is available to any person with a temporary or long-term certified and documented disability, to Medicare card holders, and to persons over 65 years old. Reduced-fare passengers pay \$1.00 one way to ride the fixed-route bus.

To receive a reduced fare, you must present your Medicare card along with a photo ID to verify your identity or present a CobbLinc issued Reduced Fare Photo ID upon boarding the bus.

2.2.1 Qualifying for a Reduced Fare Breeze Card

Eligible customers can obtain a Reduced Fare Photo ID by completing Section A of the Reduced Fare Application and providing the required documentation.

The Reduced Fare Application is available online at www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/cobblinc-general-information under "Downloads" or you can call customer service at (770) 427-4444 and request that a copy be mailed to you.

2.2.1.1 Disabled Individuals

In addition to completing Section A of the application, **disabled individuals** must provide documentation of one of the following:

- Certification by a health care provider (application Sections B & C)
- Social Security benefits
- Certification by another transit provider
- 100% V.A. Disability Benefits

2.2.1.2 Seniors/Youth/Medicare Card Holders

In addition to completing Section A of the application, **seniors** age 65 or older and **youth** age 18 or younger must provide proof of age, and **Medicare Card holders** must provide a valid photo ID showing proof of identity.

2.3 Fixed-Route Travel Training

CobbLinc is committed to training and enabling disabled customers to use the fixed-route system as a way of increasing their independence and ability to travel to all areas served by public transportation. Any individual and/or group interested in participating in a free training seminar can arrange it by calling the CobbLinc Mobility Outreach Coordinator at (770) 528-4381.

3 PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION

3.1 Who is Eligible?

The determining factor in deciding if a passenger qualifies for ADA Complementary Paratransit service is whether the passenger can functionally ride or access the bus. It is not a medical determination; it is a functional ability analysis. A disability that

makes travel more difficult, but not impossible, does not qualify an individual for eligibility.

ADA regulations outline three categories of ADA Complementary Paratransit eligibility:

- **Category 1** is for persons with disabilities who cannot use the fixed-route system without the assistance of another person.
- **Category 2** is for persons with disabilities who could use the fixed-route system if the vehicles were accessible and available.
- **Category 3** is for persons with a “specific impairment-related condition, which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system” (ADA regulation 37.123(e) (3)).

3.2 Certification Process

To start the certification process, you must complete and return *Part A* of the Application for Paratransit Eligibility. This section must be completed in its entirety. The information about the licensed/certified Healthcare Professional, teacher, or social worker familiar with the applicant’s history must be included on the application.

Applications are available on our website at:

www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/paratransit

If you would like to receive an application by mail and/or need assistance filling out the application, please contact the CobbLinc Paratransit Administrator at (770) 429-7855 during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.

Completed applications can be faxed to (770) 429-7865, Attn: Paratransit Application or returned via U.S. Mail to:

CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center
Attn: Paratransit Certifications
431 Commerce Park Drive
Marietta, GA 30060-2737

Part B of the Application for Paratransit Eligibility is used to verify functional ability. CobbLinc staff will fax Part B to the health care professional, teacher, or social worker identified by the applicant in Section A of the application. Please make sure the information i.e. fax number to the health care professional is correct to avoid any

delays in this process. All medical information provided regarding your disability will be kept strictly confidential.

Once the completed **Part A and Part B** are returned to CobbLinc, the application will be considered complete and eligibility will be determined within 21 business days excluding holidays. If this process is not completed within 21 business days, in compliance with ADA Sec 37.125 (c), the applicant will be presumed eligible and may use the paratransit service until a decision is made. The applicant will be notified of the final decision in writing.

Note: If Part B of the application is not returned to CobbLinc by your healthcare professional within 10-15 business days from the date it was faxed to them by CobbLinc staff, a denial determination will be issued.

Paratransit Certification for Temporary Disabilities

Persons with temporary disabilities may obtain a CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID that is valid for the expected time of the disability by using the same application eligibility process. If the disability continues longer than identified on the application, or becomes permanent, CobbLinc will require a new application to be submitted.

3.2.1 Paratransit Service for Visitors

Visitors to Cobb County who are functionally disabled, will be given “presumptive eligibility” and can ride for up to 21 calendar days each year without being certified by CobbLinc. Visitors can provide proof of disability when boarding the vehicle by supplying a Paratransit Identification Card from another transit system. Visitors with disabilities who do not have proof of disability from another transit system may still use the system. Documentation may be required for those whose disability is not apparent.

3.3 Appeals

If an applicant is denied eligibility, the applicant may appeal the decision either in writing or in person.

Appeals must be submitted within 60 calendar days from the date of the notification letter of the applicant's eligibility status.

To begin the appeals process, please send the notification letter of eligibility status, along with all additional information you would like the Appeal Panel to consider, to:

CobbLinc Administrative Offices
Attn: Paratransit Appeals
463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 112
Marietta, GA 30060-2737

If nothing in the eligibility decision is changed after reviewing all available information, an appeals hearing will be scheduled. CobbLinc will notify you in writing of the location and time of the appeals hearing. The appellant may attend the hearing, but it is not mandatory. The appellant must provide his/her own transportation to the appeals hearing. The appellant will receive written notification of the Appeals Board decision within 30 calendar days of the appeals hearing date.

3.4 Duration of Eligibility/Recertification

Paratransit certification is good for four (4) years unless temporary eligibility is given based on a temporary functional need. The certification expiration date will be noted in your certification letter. An application form will be mailed to the customer two (2) months prior to the expiration date, along with an enclosed letter informing the customer that their certification for paratransit service is up for renewal. Failure to return the application in a timely manner may result in a loss of service.

3.4.1 Denial of Recertification

If the application for recertification is denied, the customer may continue to use the paratransit service for 60 calendar days from the date of the notification letter. If the customer does not file an appeal within those 60 calendar days, the customer's service will be discontinued on the 61st calendar day.

3.4.2 Appealing Denial of Recertification

If an applicant is denied recertification, the applicant may file an appeal within 60 calendar days from the date of the notification letter of the applicant's recertification status. If an appeal is filed, the appellant can continue to use the paratransit service until the Paratransit Appeals Board determine the customer's eligibility. The customer will receive written notification of the Appeals Board decision within 30 calendar days of the appeals hearing. If the recertification application appeal is denied by the Appeals Board, paratransit service will be discontinued 10 business days from the date of the Appeals Board decision letter.

3.5 Obtaining A Paratransit ID Card

Once approved, applicants must go to the CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center located at 431 Commerce Park Drive, Marietta, GA 30060 to receive their identification card. Eligible customers may ride the CobbLinc Paratransit Service for free to receive their CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID. However, the return trip is not free.

The CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID is a special Breeze Card with a photo and must be presented to the operator upon boarding the paratransit vehicle. The CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID is accepted at other transit agencies within the United States. Consult with the local transit agency regarding applicable rules and regulations.

3.6 Lost/Stolen Paratransit ID Cards

If a customer misplaces their CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID, or if it is lost or stolen, a replacement card can be obtained for a fee of \$5.00 by visiting the CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center located at 431 Commerce Park Drive, Marietta, Georgia 30060, Monday through Friday during normal business hours. Contact the CobbLinc Paratransit Administrator at (770) 429-7855 for questions regarding the CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID. Trips cannot be taken without showing a valid CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID.

4 PLANNING YOUR TRIP

To ensure timely pick-ups, drop-offs, and avoid the risk of a no-show, the minimum recommended time between trips is one (1) hour.

CobbLinc **does not have a no-show strand policy**. If a no-show is issued, the bus will proceed to its next destination and will not return to pick you up.

4.1 Determining Your Pick-up Time

Customers can request their pick-up time based on the time they need to be dropped off for an appointment or based on the time they wish to be picked up.

For example, if you must be at a location by 9:00 am, use this time to determine an appropriate pick-up time that will get you to your destination on time.

Or if you end work at 4:00 pm, use this time to determine an appropriate pick up time.

When determining your requested pick-up time, please keep rush hour traffic in mind. Every effort will be made to accommodate your requested pick-up time, however,

there are factors that may affect pick-up, drop-off, and travel times for paratransit service, such as:

- Shared-ride trips
- Pick-up windows
- Vehicle wait times
- Service demand

4.1.1 Shared-Ride Trips

Because CobbLinc's Paratransit Service is a shared-ride service, your vehicle may make additional stops to pick up or drop off other customers. As such, your trip time may be as long as a comparable fixed-route trip plus an additional one-half (½) hour for travel and/or wait time for shared-ride passengers.

4.1.2 Pick-up Windows

When a ride is scheduled, the vehicle is given a 30-minute pick-up window that starts 15 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time and ends 15 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time. Customers must be ready to board the vehicle at any time during this 30-minute window.

If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the 30-minute period, please contact CobbLinc Dispatch at (770) 424-3265, TDD 711, for assistance.

4.1.3 Vehicle Wait Time

It is important to be at the designated pick-up location at the scheduled pick-up time provided by the reservationist. The vehicle will wait up to five (5) minutes past the scheduled pick-up time for a passenger to arrive at the curb or designated pick-up point. The operator cannot leave or charge you with a no-show, until five (5) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

The vehicle is not permitted to wait while the passenger conducts business at their destination. The passenger will need to make a reservation for their return trip. Pick-up time and operator wait time requirements will also apply to the return trip.

4.1.4 Demand for Service

Customers may be asked to adjust their requested pick-up or drop-off times due to high demand at certain times of the day for paratransit service.

It is permissible under ADA regulations for reservations staff to negotiate the requested pick-up or drop-off time within a one-hour window before or after the passenger's requested time. The reservationist will consider trip constraints, such as latest arrival times or earliest pick-up times, as well as vehicle travel time and the 30-minute pick-up window, when negotiating pick-up/drop-off times.

4.2 Return/Round Trip Times

To ensure timely pick-ups, drop-offs, and avoid the risk of a no-show, the minimum recommended time between trips is one (1) hour.

If a customer chooses to schedule their trips too close together and is not ready to board the vehicle for the return trip within **five (5) minutes of the scheduled pick-up time**, a no-show will be given and the vehicle will not return to pick them up after it leaves the pick-up location.

5 RESERVATIONS

A reservationist is the only person that can make a trip reservation; vehicle operators are not allowed to make reservations.

You can make reservations Monday through Sunday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm by calling (770) 427-2222, TDD 711.

If you are calling to schedule a trip that requires a connection to MARTA Mobility, calling before 3:00 pm is preferred for optimal service scheduling, especially for newly eligible riders whose accounts are not yet established in MARTA's and/or CobbLinc's systems.

No same-day trips or reservations are available. For your convenience, CobbLinc also offers advanced reservations and subscription service (standing orders).

5.1 Advanced Reservations

Reservations can be made up to three (3) days in advance. There are no daily limits on the number of reservations the customer can request. Reservation space is assigned on a first come, first served basis.

5.2 Subscription Services/Standing Orders

Subscription service is restricted to medical, educational, and employment related trips made a minimum of three (3) days per week using the same destination and time.

Once a subscription is assigned, it will not be necessary to call back and reserve that trip individually. Please note that customers with subscription services (standing orders) are not notified for trip confirmation.

Certain time periods may not have subscription time slots available. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), total subscription trips may not exceed 50 percent of space availability at any time during the day.

If no corresponding time slot is available at the time of a customer request, the customer may place their name on the subscription waiting list. Subscriptions will be assigned as space becomes available.

5.2.1 Changes to Existing Subscription

All changes to subscriptions must be made at least one day in advance. Same day address changes cannot be accommodated.

If a customer chooses to change the subscription time, it will be handled as a new subscription request and subject to availability.

5.2.2 Adjustments to Existing Subscriptions

As traffic patterns and demographics change, CobbLinc Paratransit reserves the right to make reasonable adjustments to existing subscriptions. Adjustments will be made on an individual basis with input from the customer and/or his/her guardian/caretaker. At no time will CobbLinc adjust a subscription without consulting with the customer.

If an agreement cannot be reached between CobbLinc and the customer, it may result in the customer's subscription being dropped from the subscription list and placed back on the request list until an appropriate time slot can be found. These changes will allow CobbLinc to make the best use of its resources while providing the timeliest service possible to all of its customers.

5.2.3 Temporary Subscription Change

The customer may temporarily change the destination or pick-up address on a subscription for a minimum of two weeks if the time slot is available. If the customer

chooses to change the subscription permanently, it will be handled as a new subscription request and placed on the waiting list if the time slot is not available.

5.3 Information Required for Reservation

When making a trip reservation, the customer must be prepared to give the reservationist the following information:

- Name
- Exact location of pick-up, including:
 - Street address
 - Complex name/subdivision name/suite no./building no./apartment no.
 - Zip code
 - Landmarks, signage, etc.
 - Designated ADA accessible entrance
- Date and time of appointment
- Exact location of drop-off, including:
 - Street address
 - Complex name/subdivision name/suite no./building no./apartment no.
 - Zip code
 - Landmarks, signage, etc.
- Desired drop-off *or* pick-up time
- Return time if a return trip is needed
- Number of passengers (including PCA/service animal/children/companion, etc.)
- Number of mobility devices
- If extra assistance is need beyond the curb
- Valid phone number

The reservationist is required to ask for complete information and will repeat the information back to the customer just to ensure the reservation was created correctly. An operator or passenger cannot change the pick-up or drop-off location on the day of the trip.

5.4 Connecting to MARTA Mobility

The CobbLinc Reservationist will coordinate transfers from CobbLinc Paratransit to MARTA Mobility when a trip requires this level of scheduling.

If you are calling to schedule a trip that requires a connection to MARTA Mobility, calling before 3:00 pm is preferred for optimal service scheduling, especially for newly eligible riders whose accounts are not yet established in MARTA's and/or CobbLinc's systems.

For interagency trips only, customers will receive a confirmation call between 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm for a reservation the following day. If you have not received confirmation of an interagency trip by 8:00 pm, please call (770) 424-3265.

Reservation changes will only be accepted Sunday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm up to the day before the customer's scheduled trip.

5.5 Cancelling a Reservation

To cancel a reservation **prior to the day of the trip**, please contact reservations at (770) 427-2222, TDD 711, Sunday through Friday, 8:00 am until 5:00 pm. Do not call reservations for same day cancellations.

For **same day cancellations**, call Paratransit Dispatch at (770) 424-3265, TDD 711, Monday through Friday, 4:00 am to 11:50 pm and on Saturday from 5:00 am to 11:47 pm. Be prepared to give the customer's name, address, date of travel, scheduled pick-up time and return trip information. To avoid increased penalties, always call to cancel the trip(s). Make sure you cancel all subsequent trips if not needed.

5.6 Same Day Hold

A same-day hold occurs when a passenger calls and indicates she/he is not ready to be picked up and requests that the trip be placed on hold. Calling for a same-day hold is permitted only under the following circumstances:

- Return trips from medical facilities or governmental offices
- If due to traffic, CobbLinc arrives at the passenger's initial destination point after the scheduled arrival time of a fixed or express route and/or Paratransit trip.

Passengers must call prior to one hour before their scheduled pick-up time to place their trip on hold. Please note that a bus will return when one becomes available. A

same-day hold pick-up cannot interfere with another passenger's trip; therefore, a passenger may have to wait for an extended period of time to be picked up.

6 COBBLINC'S NO-SHOW POLICY

CobbLinc **does not have a no-show strand policy**. If a no-show is issued, the bus will proceed to its next destination and will not return to pick you up.

6.1 Definition of No-Show

A No-Show is a CobbLinc Paratransit trip that is scheduled, but the customer:

- Without notice to CobbLinc Paratransit, fails to take the trip or
- Cancels the trip within 1 hour of the scheduled pick-up time.

A no-show will be added to a passenger's record when the following situation(s) occur:

- Not being at the pick-up point within five (5) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. (Do not leave the pick-up location until the 30-minute window has passed.) If the vehicle arrives after the scheduled pick-up time, operators are instructed to wait five (5) minutes before issuing a no show.
- Cancelling a ride less than one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time.
- Choosing not to ride after the vehicle arrives for pick-up.
- Not taking the trip due to not having the proper fare.
- The vehicle is unable to enter a gated community due to problems with the gate or gate lock.

If a customer fails to show up for a scheduled trip and a no-show is recorded, any other trips for that day will remain on the schedule. **It is the responsibility of the passenger to cancel any other trips for the day if not needed.** Under Federal law, CobbLinc may not assume that a customer will not take the other scheduled trips for that day.

If a trip is cancelled due to a CobbLinc error, the customer will not be issued no-shows for all affected trips for that day. If an extended traffic delay that is verified by CobbLinc's Automatic Vehicle Location system and Paratransit Dispatch causes a change in the existing reservation times, the customer will not be held accountable.

6.2 Notice of No-Show

A letter will be sent to customers who receive two (2) no-shows in one calendar month to alert them of the potential for suspension of service if additional no-shows occur. A second letter will be sent when the total of no-shows reaches three (3) in one calendar month to notify them of the risk of having service suspended.

6.3 Suspension of Service

6.3.1 Suspension Due to Passenger No-Shows

If a customer receives four (4) or more no-shows in one calendar month AND these equal more than 10% of the rider's total scheduled trips for the calendar month, that customer will be suspended. The duration of the suspension increases with multiple violations as shown below:

- **1st suspension** – loss of Paratransit privileges for seven (7) days
- **2nd suspension** – loss of Paratransit privileges for fourteen (14) days
- **3rd suspension** – loss of Paratransit privileges for thirty (30) days

Any customer who receives a suspension will be notified of such in writing and has 10 business days to file an appeal.

The suspension period will begin 15 calendar days from the date of the suspension notice letter and will be shown on the suspension notice letter.

6.3.2 Suspension Due to No-Shows for Subscription Service

A subscription customer who is suspended due to no-show violations will lose their current subscription status and may reapply after the suspension is completed.

6.4 Suspension of Service Appeal

Any passenger who receives a suspension has the opportunity to appeal. The appeals process is **not for individual no-show incidents** that pose no risk of having service suspended. The appeals process is available when the customer receives a letter notifying them that they are at risk of having service suspended. This letter will also notify them of the opportunity to appeal all the no-show violations that may lead to a suspension of service.

Appeals must be in writing and must be received by CobbLinc **within 10 business days of receipt of the Suspension Notification Letter**. The appeal should be addressed to:

CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center
Attn: Paratransit Suspension Appeal
431 Commerce Park Drive
Marietta, GA 30060

The passenger will be notified in writing of an appeal hearing date and time. Appeals are held the third Monday of each month unless otherwise notified. If an appeal is made, service will continue until the appeal is decided.

Written notification of the Appeals Board decision will be sent to the passenger within 30 calendar days of the appeals hearing. If the appeal is denied, the suspension will begin 10 business days from the date of receipt of the Appeals Board decision letter.

7 RIDING PARATRANSIT

Operators remain with the vehicle and do not go inside any facility, apartment, office, nursing home, adult day care center, medical facility, or any other location.

7.1 Boarding the Vehicle

Passengers must have their CobbLinc Paratransit Photo ID, fare ticket(s), or money (exact change is required) ready to present to the operator when boarding the vehicle. Failure to provide a ticket, pass, or exact fare currency at the time of boarding will result in the disruption of a passenger's service and a no-show will be added to the passenger's record.

7.1.1 Operator Assistance

Operators provide assistance to passengers while getting on and off the vehicle. However, to meet the requirements of ADA origin-to-destination service, assistance beyond the curb may be provided on an individual, case-by-case basis due to disability, adverse weather and/or physical barriers. You must let the reservationist know that you will need extra assistance when making a reservation.

Operators are not permitted to take passengers up or down steps, ramps, or walks. The operator will provide assistance with the use of lifts, ramps, and securement devices.

The operator will assist in pushing a manual wheelchair up the ramp or onto the lift of the bus. Operators do not assist with packages and/or personal items.

7.1.2 Pick-Up Locations

Customers should be waiting in the designated area when the vehicle arrives to pick them up.

- Medical Facilities/Large Complexes/Churches: Customers must meet the vehicle in front of the building at the closest curb to the main reception desk or main lobby entrance.
- Malls: Customers will be picked up and dropped off at the main entrance that is closest to the food court location.
 - Town Center Mall, covered entrance located on lower level. The vehicle drives under the canopy and customers will be picked up and dropped off at this location only.
 - Cumberland Mall, entrance marked "Food Court" with double ramp access. Customers will be picked up and dropped off at this location only.
- Gated Complexes/Communities: Customers residing in/traveling to or from a gated community should remain in their apartment until notified that the vehicle is at the gate. If the buzzer at the gate does not work, the operator will call dispatch and dispatch will notify the customer to open the gate. If the vehicle is unable to enter the community due to problem with the gate or gate lock, a no-show will be issued.

7.1.3 Boarding with Mobility Aids

CobbLinc may refuse to board a passenger on the lift if the lift or vehicle is unable to accommodate the wheelchair and its user, consistent with legitimate safety requirements.

Any passenger may use the lift at any designated stop. Operators are instructed to deploy a lift, at the request of the passenger, to board or exit the vehicle.

A wheelchair, is defined by ADA regulations, as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three-or-more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

For passenger safety and comfort, CobbLinc has established the following lift operating procedures and guidelines:

- Wheelchairs should be backed onto the lift (forward boarding is allowed).
- Brakes must be locked, if applicable, while on the lift.
- Electric power to the wheelchair should be turned off. The operator will instruct the customer when to reengage the power.
- Customers should wait for the operator's assistance and follow instructions when entering or exiting the vehicle.
- CobbLinc cannot transport customers with inoperative mobility devices.
- All wheelchairs and scooters must be secured. Any customer refusing to have their wheelchair or scooter secured will not be transported.

Customers may also transport oxygen concentrators or supplemental oxygen apparatus at any time when needed.

7.1.4 Personal Care Attendants

If a passenger requires a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), this must be approved during the initial certification process or when there is a change in the passenger's functional ability to use the service. PCAs ride for free and must board and exit the vehicle with the customer.

To prevent potential abuse of this provision, a friend or family member does not count as a PCA unless the customer regularly makes use of a PCA and the companion is actually acting in that capacity, as provided for in 49 CFR Part 37 Subtitle A, Appendix D.

Please inform the reservationist when making your reservation if a PCA will be traveling with you. If the customer requires a PCA and is under the age of 12, the PCA must be an adult. Customers must provide their own attendant; CobbLinc cannot provide attendants.

7.1.5 Traveling Companions

When making reservations, customers must inform the reservationist of any travel companions and any mobility device(s) the companion will be using. Traveling

companions, including children, that ride with the customer do not need to be certified by CobbLinc and do not need an ID card.

One traveling companion may ride with a paratransit passenger and must board and exit the vehicle with the customer. Appropriate fare must be paid for a traveling companion, including children over 42 inches tall.

Additional companions may ride if space is available and must pay the appropriate fare.

7.1.6 Service Animals

Service animals are allowed on CobbLinc vehicles and in CobbLinc facilities. A customer may board a vehicle at any time with a service animal with no prior arrangements. A service animal is defined by ADA as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items. Please describe to the operator/employee what physical function or task the service animal will be providing. For safety reasons, operators are not permitted to handle service animals.

7.1.7 Packages and Personal Belongings

While packages are allowed on the vehicle, operators do not provide assistance loading or unloading packages, personal items, groceries, or luggage. The number of packages allowed is only what a customer (or the PCA, companion, or child) can carry on or off the vehicle in one (1) trip.

Passengers will be required to secure their packages at their seats, as storage space on the vehicle is limited.

Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated. The maximum combined weight of all packages cannot exceed twenty-five (25) pounds.

7.2 Exiting the Vehicle

7.2.1 Closed Business/No Entry

If a business is closed upon the arrival of the vehicle, the passenger can choose to stay on the vehicle and be dropped off at the return address at the convenience of CobbLinc

(return trip fare must be paid), or the passenger can exit the bus and wait for the return trip vehicle to pick them up.

7.2.2 Unattended Passengers

If the passenger cannot be left unattended after exiting the vehicle and the caretaker is not at the drop-off location when the vehicle arrives, the passenger will remain on the vehicle and the vehicle will continue as scheduled. The operator will contact CobbLinc Dispatch for assistance. CobbLinc Dispatch will call the emergency contact number and provide the caretaker with the next safe drop-off location to meet the vehicle in-route. If the contact number is not answered or if the number is disconnected, DFCS/911 will be called to take custody of the passenger.

8 CODE OF CONDUCT

8.1 Customer Conduct

The following rules are provided to ensure the safety and comfort of all customers on board CobbLinc vehicles.

- No eating, drinking, smoking or littering.
- No riding under the influence of alcohol and/or intoxicating drugs.
- No operating or tampering with any equipment while in the vehicle, including the hydraulic lift and wheelchair tie downs.
- Wear seatbelts and check that wheelchair tie downs are secure.
- Use earphones when playing electronic devices, TVs, radios and tape players.
- Fold strollers.
- No weapons allowed on CobbLinc buses
- Shirts and shoes are required to board and ride the bus
- No screaming, cursing, profanity and/or abusive behavior towards other passengers / drivers.

8.2 Operator Conduct

Operators are expected to obey the same rules as passengers. The following rules also apply:

- Operators are not allowed to accept tips or gratuities, or act in any manner that would suggest that tipping is appropriate. This includes special occasions such as birthdays and/or holidays.
- Operators are not allowed to have casual conversations with passengers or engage in any other distracting activity (i.e. using a cell phone or electronic audio and/or video device) while operating a vehicle.
- Operators are not allowed to enter private dwellings (homes or apartments) of passengers.
- Operators are not personal care attendants but will assist passengers on / off the bus, pushing and securing mobility devices, opening exterior doors to buildings, and providing safe rides.

9 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

9.1 Compliments, Complaints, and Comments

We look forward to working with our passengers to provide the best service possible. If you have general suggestions, questions, complaints or commendations, please call Customer Service at (770) 427-4444, TDD 711, or provide your feedback in writing via email to cobblinc_cs@cobbcounty.org or via U.S. Mail to:

CobbLinc Customer Service & Paratransit Center
Attn: Customer Service
431 Commerce Park Drive
Marietta, GA 30060-2737

Be sure to provide your contact information along with the complaint details so we can follow up with you.

9.2 ADA Complaints

Any individual who believes they have been denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or subject to discrimination on the grounds of their disability may file a formal complaint with CobbLinc.

You can download the **ADA Discrimination Complaint Form** on our website at www.cobbcounty.org/transportation/cobblinc/paratransit

or call the Transit Operations Monitor at (770) 528-3690 to request that a form be sent to you.

Completed forms should be returned via:

- Fax to (770) 528-4360 (Attn: Transit Operations Monitor)
- Email to cobblinc_cs@cobbcounty.org
- U.S. Mail to CobbLinc, Attn: Transit Operations Specialist, 463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 112, Marietta, GA 30060-2737

If you prefer to submit your complaints in writing in your own words, you may do so. Your letter should include sufficient detail to permit proper research and response to your concern. Be sure to include your name, address, daytime phone number, date of incident, time of day, location and description of the problem.

Complaints are responded to either in writing or verbally within seven (7) business days. If your complaint is not addressed within the seven (7) business days after filing the complaint, please contact the Transit Division Manager at (770) 528-1614.

9.3 Cobb County Government Grievance Procedure under The Americans with Disabilities Act

Cobb County Government has an independent Grievance Procedure established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by the Cobb County Government.

For more information, please contact the Cobb County ADA Coordinator.

Cobb County ADA Coordinator
P.O. Box 649
Marietta, GA 30061
(770) 528-2655
ADACoordinator2655@cobbcounty.org

9.4 Reasonable Accommodations

According to the Code of Federal Regulations, 49 CFR 37.169, CobbLinc is required to provide reasonable modification/accommodations for people with a disability to access CobbLinc's transportation bus service. This request can be made in advance or on-the-spot, depending upon the circumstance.

When making a request, please thoroughly describe what is needed in order for you to use the service and why this assistance is necessary.

Whenever feasible, a request for modification to CobbLinc's service, policies, practice, or procedures should be made in advance before CobbLinc is expected to provide the service. CobbLinc will review your request and will make every effort to communicate in advance whether or not the requested modification can be made.

If the modification is not made, CobbLinc will provide the reason for the denial of the request. Requests may be denied on one or more of the following grounds:

- Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of CobbLinc's service, programs, or activities;
- Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of the requestor or others;
- Granting the request would create an undue financial or administrative burden for CobbLinc; or
- Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use CobbLinc's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.

Requests may be directed to:

CobbLinc
Attn: Transit Operations Monitor
463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 112
Marietta, Georgia 30060-2737
(770) 528-3690, TDD: 711

Or to the Cobb County ADA Coordinator at:

P.O. Box 649
Marietta, GA 30061
(770) 528-2655
ADACoordinator2655@cobbcounty.org

9.5 Title VI Complaints

Any person who feels that he or she, individually or as a member of any class of persons, on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin has been excluded from or

denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination caused by CobbLinc, may file a written complaint with the Transit Contracts Manager.

Such complaints must be filed within 180 calendar days after the date the discrimination occurred. *Note: Upon request, assistance in the preparation of any necessary written material will be provided to a person or persons who are unable to read or write.*

Complaints should be mailed to:

CobbLinc
Attention: Transit Contracts Manager
463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 112
Marietta, GA 30060

Complaints can also be submitted via email to TitleVI@cobbcounty.org.

9.6 Citizen Groups

CobbLinc has two citizen advisory groups that meet regularly to discuss the transit service and areas for improvement. The public is welcome to attend any meeting. Anyone interested in attending can call (770) 528-1610 to confirm the date, time, and location of the next meeting.

9.6.1 Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meets on the third Monday of every other month to review the status of the elderly and disabled transportation service provided by CobbLinc and make recommendations for improvements. This meeting is generally held between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm at CobbLinc, 463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 114, Marietta, GA 30060.

9.6.2 Transit Advisory Board

The Transit Advisory Board (TAB) meets once a month to review public transportation in general and recommend improvements to enhance transportation alternatives and services for everyone. This meeting is generally scheduled on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 pm at CobbLinc, 463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 114, Marietta, GA 30060.

CobbLinc Paratransit Service Area

Updated September 8, 2019

