

## A QUICK, UNOFFICIAL USER'S GUIDE TO ACCESS SERVICES

### ACCESS Website -

[https://ACCESSla.org/riding\\_ACCESS/ACCESS\\_riders\\_guide/pay\\_your\\_ride.html](https://ACCESSla.org/riding_ACCESS/ACCESS_riders_guide/pay_your_ride.html)

### General Information

The Federal Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires bus and rail transit operators throughout the nation to provide complementary paratransit service for functionally disabled individuals who are not able to use their fixed route bus and rail service. In Los Angeles County, the fixed route operators use ACCESS Services, Inc. (ACCESS) to provide their federally-mandated complementary paratransit service.

ACCESS services are available for any eligible individual to any location within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of any fixed bus route operated by the Los Angeles County public transit bus operators and within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile around METRO Rail stations during the hours that the bus and rail operates. The ADA does not require commuter rail and commuter bus services (Metrolink, Amtrak, Commuter Express, etc.) to provide complementary ADA paratransit service.

ACCESS serves eligible persons with disabilities who, because of their disability, are unable to use regular bus or rail transit services. Like public buses and trains, ACCESS is a curb-to-curb shared-ride service (several riders are transported at one time in the same vehicle). It is not private cab service, emergency medical or social service transportation, and is not door-to-door service.

ADA prohibits ACCESS from prioritizing trips based on their purpose. The trip is planned for driver efficiency. No change in drop off location is allowed once you are onboard. ACCESS may not be able to transport a wheelchair or mobility device larger than 30" wide and 48" long and weighing more than 600 lbs. when occupied.

The ACCESS service area is divided into six zones and extends into the limited areas of San Bernardino, Orange and Ventura Counties that are served by Los Angeles County fixed-route bus lines.

ACCESS operates on the same schedule as most buses. Regular service is offered from 4:00 am to 12:00 am, 7 days a week. Limited service is available from 12:00 AM to 4:00 AM. As a shared ride service your travel time will be similar to that of a fixed-route bus, not a car or taxi. The vehicle may make multiple pickups and drop offs before you arrive at your destination. Your travel time may range significantly depending on the number of stops, traffic, etc. Typical trip lengths and times are:

<u>Trip Length</u>	<u>(Example)</u>	<u>Trip Time</u>
1 - 10 miles	(Pac. Pal. To Santa Monica/West LA / Malibu)	30 min. to 1/1/2 hrs.
11 - 20 miles	(Pac. Pal. To Pepperdine / LAX / La Cienega)	1 hour to 2 hrs.
21-30 miles	(Pac. Pal. To Downtown LA / SF Valley / Hollywood)	1 1/2 to 3 hours
30 miles +	(to end of parallel fixed route bus line.)	2 to 3 hours

### **Eligibility and Application Process**

You must pre-qualify and be issued an ACCESS ID card. Determination of your eligibility requires an in-person assessment appointment. ACCESS will transport you and your assistant free to and from the ACCESS eligibility center for the assessment appointment. The DREDF.org website provides a guide: "ADA Eligibility – How to make your Case". The guide is available at:

<https://dredf.org/news/publications/ada-paratransit-eligibility/>

### **Application process:**

1. Call customer service (1-800-827-0829, weekdays 8 am to 5 pm) for an eligibility application form and #;
2. Complete and mail application;
3. 7 days later call 1-626-532-1616 to schedule in-person assessment appointment and rides;
4. Bring to the appointment valid photo id, any health care professional verification that supports diagnosis of disability. The in-person assessment includes physical, mental, medical limitations to ride fixed route independently (request door-to-door service if needed);
5. You will be informed within 21 days of eligibility assessment status. If eligible, you will get an ACCESS ID Number.
6. Your ACCESS ID card has an expiration date. ACCESS will send a renewal application prior to expiration of the card. The card is usually renewed by mail or ACCESS may require a new assessment appointment.

### **ACCESS Fares and Fare Payment**

Your one-way fare is based on the distance you travel. The \$2.75 minimum fare covers a one-way trip under 19.9 miles; a 75-cent zone charge is added for a one-way trip over 20 miles. Trips to Santa Clarita and Antelope Valleys cost more.

You are allowed to bring a Personal Care Assistant (PCA) and up to 2 guests and a service animal. The PCA and service animal are not charged a fare. Guests pay the same fare as you do. Drivers cannot accept tips.

Fares can be paid after boarding the vehicle using exact change, Visa, Mastercard or Discover card. 10-Ride Coupon Books (\$27.50) and 10-ride Zone Coupon Books (\$7.50) can be purchased by mail or online. It will take 7 to 10 days to receive your coupons.

To Order Coupon books by mail, write your ACCESS Rider ID Number on your check or money order. Send your payment and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:  
ACCESS Coupons, PO Box 5728, El Monte, CA 91734

To Order ACCESS Coupons online, visit ACCESSla.org, select "Riding ACCESS" and then "Coupon Books." Follow the instructions provided.

## Reservations

You must have a reservation to travel on ACCESS. ACCESS is organized into 6 zones. To ensure you are picked up at the right location with the appropriate vehicle, you must call ACCESS (1-800-827-0829) with any changes in your condition, your residence location, or your equipment.

Reservations are made with the zone operator in the zone in which the pickup is to be made. You can schedule up to six rides per day in the same zone. You need to call separately to book any return trip from outside the initial zone.

ACCESS has two types of reservations; Next Day and Standing Order.

### A. Next Day ride reservation

1. call 1-800-883-1295 6 am – 10 pm.
2. Select your zone (e.g.: Central Westside);
3. Provide the operator your ACCESS ID Number, address of pickup, address of destination, landmarks (back of bldg., nearest major intersection), any mobility device (walker, manual or electric wheelchair), the time you want to be picked up, and your cell phone # if you want a call out when the ACCESS vehicle arrives.
4. Although ACCESS is a curb-to-curb service, your eligibility assessment may determine that you are eligible for door-to-door service. When making the reservation, ask for door-to-door service if you are eligible.

### B. Standing Order ride reservations

1. Standing Order Rides are available for recurring trips that happen on the same day each week at the same time to the same destination for at least the next six weeks. The ACCESS vehicle automatically arrives at the pickup location at a pre-scheduled time. Standing Order rides do NOT include major holidays (call for a Next Day ride if needed on holidays);
2. Call at least two weeks ahead to set up a Standing Order reservation.

## Taking the Trip

1. Be ready at the pickup spot five minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The vehicle has no bathroom and the driver is not allowed to stop to allow you to use a bathroom en route.
2. The driver is required to wait only 5 minutes after your scheduled pick up time.
3. Driver has 20 minutes after the scheduled pick up time to arrive.
4. If the vehicle does not show up within 20 minutes of the scheduled time, call 1-800-883-1295, ask for an estimated time of arrival and the vehicle number to confirm ride was scheduled.
5. To cancel a trip, call 1-800-883-1295 at least two hours before the scheduled trip.
6. If you do not show for a trip more than 5 times in a calendar month or more than 10% of your scheduled trips each calendar month, you may be suspended.
7. To appeal a suspension due to “no shows”, call ACCESS Customer Services Support 1-800-827-0829.