

ADA Paratransit Cancellation Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) paratransit services (PTS), provided in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), operate efficiently and effectively while respecting the rights of all passengers. WATA PTS passengers who establish a pattern or practice of excessive “no-shows” or late cancellations may be subject to suspension of PTS. This policy is necessary to emphasize the negative impact of late cancellations and no-shows, and it outlines the procedures and expectations regarding passenger cancellations of scheduled PTS rides.

2. Definitions

A. Cancellation: A cancellation is when a passenger withdraws a request for a paratransit ride that was previously scheduled by contacting WATA directly by phone.

1) Standard Cancellation: A standard (timely) cancellation is when a passenger notifies WATA at least one hour before the scheduled pick-up time. This can be done by phone.

2) Late Cancellation: A late cancellation is when a passenger notifies WATA less than one hour before the scheduled pick-up time.

B. No-show: A no-show occurs when a passenger does not appear for a scheduled ride within five (5) minutes of the PTS vehicle arriving within the scheduled pick-up window without previously canceling the ride. (The pick-up window is 30 minutes in duration, extending from 15 minutes before to 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.)

C. Violation: A late cancellation and a no-show each constitute a violation.

3. Passenger Responsibilities

A. Passengers are responsible for informing WATA of cancellations as soon as possible, but **no less than one hour before the scheduled pick-up time**. No-shows and late cancellations can affect the availability of services for other passengers as well as disrupt the schedules of the drivers.

B. If a passenger’s plans change and he/she no longer needs the ride, the passenger should cancel the ride to avoid inconveniencing other passengers and penalties in accordance with this policy.

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4. Penalties and Exceptions

A. Penalties:

1) Excessive violations may result in penalties, such as a warning notice or suspension of PTS service. WATA will follow a progressive disciplinary approach, beginning with a warning and followed by potential service suspensions.

2) Four (4) or more violations in a one-month period, or six (6) within a two-month period will be considered excessive and subject to penalties in accordance with this policy. Passengers with excessive violations may be subject to PTS suspension as described below.

3) **Warning:** In the first instance of excessive violations, WATA ADA/PTS Supervisor will issue a warning to the passenger.

4) **Suspension of PTS:** The WATA Director of Operations may suspend PTS if the passenger accrues additional violations within a 12-month period of a warning. Duration of the suspension will depend on the number and frequency of violations and may range from one week to one year.

B. Exceptions:

1) The WATA ADA Supervisor will consider exceptions to violations in cases of emergency, illness, or other unforeseen circumstances. Passengers are encouraged to provide documentation if available to support an exception.

2) WATA will also consider exceptions for PTS scheduling errors and similar circumstances out of the passenger's control.

5. Violation and Penalty Notification Process

A. The WATA ADA/PTS Supervisor or designee will contact passengers on each occasion of a no-show or late cancellation to determine if an exception applies. (This is not necessary if the passenger provides the Supervisor with a reason when cancelling.) If no exception applies, the ADA/PTS Supervisor will record the incident. This direct and immediate communication is necessary to correct possible misunderstandings/miscommunications and to achieve early resolutions to problems.

B. Upon the first accumulation of excessive violations, the ADA/PTS Supervisor will notify the passenger in writing and by phone of the violations and as a warning of possible PTS suspension for future violations.

C. If violations continue to accrue after a warning, the ADA/PTS Supervisor will inform the passenger that WATA is considering PTS suspension and that the passenger may present information to the WATA Director of Operations for consideration within five (5) working days (Monday-Friday, except Federal holidays) of notification.

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D. No less than ten (10) days after notification of consideration for suspension, the Director of Operations will notify the passenger of his/her decision in writing and by phone. Until this notification, the passenger may continue to receive PTS and WATA will honor any PTS scheduled rides for two weeks if made prior to notification.

E. All correspondence will cite specific trips and dates of the violations.

F. If WATA is aware that a passenger receiving a warning or suspension obtains ADA/PTS passes from a supporting agency (e.g., William & Mary, a municipality social services, or a human services-providing non-profit organization), WATA will inform the agency.

6. Appeals Process

Passengers who believe they have been unfairly penalized or wish to contest a violation record may appeal to the WATA Executive Director. The Executive Director will review the appeal and decide within 15 working days, notifying the passenger in writing and by phone. During this period, the suspension will be stayed pending the outcome of the appeal.

8. Contact Information

For questions regarding this policy or to appeal a decision, passengers may contact WATA at:

- **Phone:** (757) 220-5493
- **Email:** info@gowata.org

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with ADA regulations and to incorporate feedback from passengers and staff.



Matthew Scalia
Executive Director

Approved: December 11, 2024
Reviewed: