

February 12, 2013

To All STAR Riders:

Sent via email and posted on the [www.arlingtonstar.com](http://www.arlingtonstar.com) website

Re: STAR Rider Guide Excerpts Regarding Same-Day Changes for Pick-up Times at Home

Many of you are aware that STAR allows time changes for return trips on the day of the trip when necessary; although STAR can't guarantee the time that the STAR vehicle will arrive. As the new STAR Rider Guide states on page 24, "We won't leave you stranded at the destination."

However, I recently learned that on an average weekday, five STAR pickup times from home are being changed after the scheduling office has closed. Same-day time changes for a home pickup were never permitted in STAR policy. Same-Day cancellations and rebookings usually force the County to pay for that ride twice – the driver's time for the original ride and the driver's time for the rescheduled ride. This is one factor causing the STAR program to run over-budget this year.

When a STAR Rider wishes to change a pick-up time, the trip must be cancelled and rescheduled. If the trip is rescheduled on the same day, this becomes a Same Day Reservation. Below are several excerpts from the STAR Rider Guide. Most of this information has consistently been in the STAR Rider Guide since 2008. The page references are from the newest rider guide, which arrived in the mail last week.

Pages 3 & 4: What is STAR?

"STAR is a shared ride paratransit service intended to provide a comparable level of transportation to that provided by ART, Metrobus and Metrorail." ...

"Trips are scheduled without regard to the purpose of the trip. All rides are arranged in advance through the STAR Call Center, through STAR on the Web, or through STAR IVR. STAR riders must preplan activities and schedule STAR trips in advance. Same day trips are reserved for emergencies only."

Pages 23: Same Day Reservations

"STAR generally does not allow riders to book a ride for that same day. STAR cannot guarantee providing same-day rides and will attempt to do so only in special situations. STAR will work to schedule rides as close to the requested times as possible."

"STAR will **attempt** to schedule a same-day ride only in the following unforeseen urgent situations:

- An unscheduled medical appointment; or

- An unanticipated family or personal crisis. Examples of a family or personal crisis include meeting a relative who has been taken to a hospital or dealing with a child's disciplinary situation at school."

Pages 47 & 48: Your Responsibilities

"Make your reservation at least one day in advance."

"Be prepared with another transportation resource, should you have an unanticipated need to travel on a same-day basis."

Effective Tuesday, February 19, 2013 – the day after the Presidents Day Holiday, the STAR transportation providers (Diamond Transportation and Red Top Cab) and the STAR Call Center will remind callers of these long-standing STAR policies.

If a STAR rider calls in a cancellation to Diamond Transportation or Red Top Cab outside Call Center hours, the caller will be reminded:

"I can do that, but the Call Center will not be able to book you a new ride for today (or tomorrow). Are you sure you want to cancel this ride?"

If a STAR rider calls to rebook a cancelled ride, the Call Center will remind the rider that:

"Making Same Day Changes from home constitutes a violation of STAR policies. STAR will attempt to book a same day trip for medical needs or personal family emergencies ONLY."

Thank you for your cooperation. My objective is to enable STAR to provide more rides on schedule within budgetary limitations.

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cc: Stephen Del Giudice, Transit Bureau Chief  
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