

STAR Policy Changes for FY 2023

Project Goals and Next Steps

Goals of this effort are:

- Review policies in light of transportation changes during pandemic
- Clarify passenger expectations in using STAR service
- Streamline and improve STAR service and operations

Reviewed peer agency policies in specific policy areas

Compare current STAR policies to similar U.S. paratransit agencies plus **MetroAccess**

Comparison Agencies:

- **Go Triangle** – Raleigh-Durham, NC
- **Gwinnett County Transit** – Lawrenceville, GA
- **SamTrans** – San Mateo, CA
- **MetroAccess**

Systems were chosen based on operational characteristics and performance:

- Urbanized areas with similar population size
- Similar number of vehicles operated at maximum service
- Provide supplemental service to area's main paratransit provider

MetroAccess: also serves DC region

Topics Covered

- Reasonable Accommodations
- Will-Call Return Trips
- Where Is My Ride?
- Trip Service Times and Locations
- Passenger Assistance
- Pick-Up Window
- Cancellation Advance Notice

Reasonable Accommodations

Current policy

- Doctor's note required

Proposed policy

- Follow FTA rules

- Customers cannot choose vehicle type

Will-Call Return Trips

Current policy

- Allowed for medical appointments, return from travel, etc.

Proposed policy

- Not allowed – all trips must be booked in advance
- Call Center will try to re-book when possible, but wait times will be longer

Where Is My Ride?

Current policy

- Customers may call 5 minutes after scheduled arrival time

Proposed policy

- Customers may call 10 minutes after scheduled arrival time

Trip Service Times and Locations

Current policy

- Limited Zone 2 trips completely outside Arlington
- Service within 3/4 mile of fixed route transit during STAR operating hours

Proposed policy

- All trips must start or end in Arlington
- Service within 3/4 miles of fixed route transit when route operates

Passenger Assistance

Current policy

- Curb to curb service
- Driver will help customers get in or out of vehicle, but cannot leave vehicle unattended

Proposed policy

- ** No change **

Pick-Up Window

Current policy

- Driver will ask for call-out 5 minutes after arrival
- No-show after 10 minutes

Proposed policy

- 30-minute window for drivers: 0-30 min after scheduled pick-up time
- Customers ready and visible at scheduled pick-up time
- Driver will ask for call-out upon arrival if customer not visible
- No-show after 5 minutes

Cancellation Advance Notice

Current policy

- Poorly worded – 45 or 60 minutes?
- No penalty for repeat on-time cancellations

Proposed policy

- Late cancellations: less than 60 min before scheduled pick-up

- Repeat On-Time Cancellation: 4+ on-time cancels in 30-day period
- Both are subject to discipline under Suspension policy

Next Steps:

- Draft Policy Changes Presented to Subcommittee (Today)
- Public Meeting (April/May)
- Review of Public Feedback (May)
- Public Meeting (Summer 2022)
- Policy Change Recommendations for Final Approval (late Summer 2022)
- Implementation of New Policies (Fall 2022)