



BUTTE REGIONAL TRANSIT (B-LINE)

ADA PARATRANSIT RIDER POLICIES



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose and Need Definition of Terms Used	
POLICIES	2
Eligibility	
Wheelchairs or Other Mobility Devices	11 12 12 12

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A
Appendix B
Appendix C

Eligibility Forms
Administrative Appeals Process
Service Area Maps

Introduction

The Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) is formed by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between the County of Butte and the incorporated cities of Chico, Gridley, Biggs, Oroville and the Town of Paradise. BCAG's JPA gives responsibility to BCAG for the administration and operation of Butte Regional Transit (B-Line Paratransit). The BCAG Board of Directors is the policy making authority for transit decisions. BCAG contracts with Transdev Transportation (Service Provider) to provide transit operations and management.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this document is to set policy, in accordance with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), regarding B-Line Paratransit systems for individual riders.

Definitions

ADA vs. Dial-a-Ride service – ADA service is provided as a complement to fixed route service to those individuals who are unable to ride the fixed route due to a disability. Dial-a-Ride service is that paratransit service that is offered to those individuals that may not be certified as ADA eligible but are age 70 and over or whose disability does not prevent them from riding the fixed route bus. Dial-a-Ride services are provided only to the extent that there is excess capacity on the paratransit system.

Demand Service - any system of transporting individuals, including the provision of designated public transportation service by public entities and the provision of transportation service by private entities, including but not limited to specified public transportation service, which is not a fixed route system.

Fixed route system - a system of transporting individuals (other than by aircraft), including the provision of designated public transportation service by public entities and the provision of transportation service by private entities, including, but not limited to, specified public transportation service, on which a vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule.

Mobility device – a mechanism such as a wheelchair, a walker or a scooter, designed to aid individuals with mobility impairments. The mechanism can be either manually operated or powered.

Paratransit – a comparable transportation service that is required by the ADA for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route transportation systems.

Service animals - animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities- such as guiding people who are blind or who have low vision, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. Service animals are working animals, not pets.

Subscription service – an ongoing standing order for a passenger traveling to the same place at the same time at least once a week for a minimum period of 90 days

Wheelchair - a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or four-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. A "common wheelchair" is such a device which does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied.

Policy on Eligibility

The ADA definition of eligibility as described in the "ADA Paratransit Regulations" addresses three categories of individuals who are eligible for complementary paratransit service. Specific definitions of the three eligibility categories described in the ADA Paratransit Regulations are as follows:

Category I:

Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Included in this category are individuals with mental or visual impairments who cannot "navigate the system."

Category 2:

Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.

Eligibility under this category depends on the accessibility of vehicles and routes. A person is eligible for paratransit service if the fixed route on which they want to travel is not yet accessible.

Category 3:

Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition, which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system.

Two important qualifiers to this category are included in the regulations. First, the "specific impairment-related condition" must prevent the person from using the fixed route system. Conditions, which make getting to or from stops more difficult, do not confer eligibility. Second, architectural barriers not under the control of the public entity and environmental barriers do not, when considered alone, confer eligibility.

If, however, travel to or from a boarding location is impossible when these factors are combined with the person's specific impairment-related condition, paratransit service must be provided.

Complementary Paratransit Service for Visitors

B-Line Paratransit will treat as eligible for the B-Line Paratransit service all visitors who present documentation that they are ADA paratransit eligible for up to 21 days from the date of the first paratransit trip used. B-Line Paratransit will then require that such an individual, in order to receive service beyond this period, apply for eligibility under the B-Line Paratransit Policies and Procedures. (Per ADA Regulations 37.127.)

Visitors with disabilities who do not present ADA Paratransit Eligibility documentation will be required to present documentation on their place of residence and of his/her disability. B-Line Paratransit shall accept a certification by such visitors that they are unable to use fixed route transit. B-Line Paratransit shall provide paratransit to such individuals for up to 30 days from the first paratransit trip used. B-Line Paratransit shall then require that such an individual, in order to receive service beyond this period, apply for eligibility under the B-Line Paratransit Policies and Procedures. (Per ADA Regulations 37.127.)

The above definitions of eligibility will prevail for all new applicants. B-Line Paratransit reserves the right to require individuals who have been certified as eligible for B-Line Paratransit services to be recertified. Persons not eligible for B-Line Paratransit Service will be referred for assistance and/or travel training on fixed route bus service whenever possible.

Application Process

B-Line Paratransit Service offers door-to-door transportation for qualified applicants as described in the Eligibility Policy. Individuals requesting B-Line Paratransit Service are required to submit an application. (See Appendix A)

The goal of this process is to ensure that only people who meet the regulatory criteria, strictly applied, are regarded as ADA paratransit eligible. This process clearly distinguishes on eligibility documentation, those persons who are ADA eligible from those who are provided service on other grounds.

Required Policy Elements for ADA Paratransit Eligibility

The following procedures are required elements for eligibility determination and apply in accordance with ADA Section 37.125.

(a) Strictly Limiting Eligibility

The certification process shall strictly limit ADA paratransit eligibility to individuals who meet the regulatory definition of eligibility.

Only those persons who meet the regulatory definition can be given documentation indicating that they are "ADA Paratransit Eligible." If individuals who are determined to be ADA paratransit eligible can use fixed route service

under certain conditions, the documentation which they are given will indicate the limitations/conditions of their eligibility.

A parallel process for Dial-a-Ride service may be established by B-Line Paratransit to determine eligibility for broader service if no financial difficulty can be foreseen to fully meet the complementary paratransit requirements. Documentation for this broader service will not indicate that these other customers are ADA paratransit eligible. ADA patrons will take precedence over non-ADA patrons.

B-Line Paratransit may integrate the eligibility determination process to use for all local paratransit services. Questions included in the application material may be used to determine if individuals qualify for broader services even if they do not qualify as ADA paratransit eligible. Documentation of eligibility will distinguish between those who qualify for the broader Dial-a-Ride service and those who meet ADA paratransit eligibility standards.

If full compliance with complementary paratransit requirements poses no undue financial burden, B-Line Paratransit may opt to accept all trip requests, regardless of conditions and circumstances, from individuals determined eligible for services. The application process will identify the extent of eligibility to allow for conditions of eligibility to be noted where applicable. The process is intended to be thorough enough to reasonably ensure that the criteria for eligibility are being properly interpreted and applied.

(b) Accessible formats

Informational materials about the process, applications for eligibility and notices determining eligibility shall be made available in accessible formats upon request. Information may not be available in the format requested, but will be made available in a format that the person can use.

(c) Processing Time/Presumptive Eligibility

Applicants will be eligible to ride for 30 days during the application process, using cash or passes. In addition, applicants will be treated as eligible if B-Line Paratransit fails to make a determination of eligibility within 21 calendar days of receipt of a **complete** application. Service will be provided and the applicant presumed eligible until and unless the determination is complete and the person is found to be ineligible.

An application is considered to be complete once the applicant has provided all of the information required. Subsequent investigations or requests for additional information by B-Line Paratransit would be considered part of the review process and within the 21 day timetable. For example, the application requires that individuals complete a form which asks them to provide information for a professional who can best attest to their functional mobility, and a HIPAA release form; the application is considered "complete" once the requested information including the information about the professional contact is received. Follow-ups by B-Line Paratransit in getting additional professional verification and information would be part of the 21 day review process.

(d) Notice of Initial Determination

Applications are processed by B-Line Paratransit and applicants will be notified in writing of the initial determination of eligibility. If the determination is that the person is not eligible, the written notification will state the specific reason(s) for the finding. A simple indication that an applicant is not ADA paratransit eligible because B-Line Paratransit has determined that they "are able to use the fixed route system" is not sufficient.

(e) Documentation of Eligibility

An applicant that is determined to be eligible will be sent documentation of eligibility specifically stating that the person is "ADA Paratransit Eligible." The document will include the name of the eligible individual, the name of the transportation provider, the phone number of B-Line Paratransit dispatch, an expiration date for eligibility, and any conditions or limitation on the individual's eligibility including the use of a personal care attendant.

(f) Administrative Appeal Process

B-Line Paratransit has established a fair and effective administrative appeal process that is available to any individual who may be determined ineligible or conditionally eligible for complementary paratransit service. Limiting eligibility is considered denying eligibility for certain trips. (See Appendix B)

The B-Line Paratransit appeal process has the following established requirements:

- Individuals are permitted to request an appeal within sixty (60) days of the initial eligibility decision, the time starting to run on the date the individual is notified of the negative initial decision;
- Individuals have an opportunity to be heard in person and to present additional information and arguments regarding their disability and ability to use the fixed route service;
- B-Line Paratransit provides for a "separation of function" between individuals involved in the initial eligibility determination and those selected to hear the appeals. B-Line Paratransit has an Appeals Committee composed of two members of BCAG staff and a member of BCAG's Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC);
- Applicants are notified of appeal decisions in writing, or in an accessible format if requested, and the notification will state the reason(s) for the decision if eligibility is still denied;
- If a decision on the appeal is not made within 30 days of the completion of the process, individuals will be considered "presumptively eligible" and will be provided paratransit service until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued. Paratransit service does not have to be provided, however, during other phases of the appeal.

Optional Policy Elements for ADA Paratransit Eligibility

The following procedures are optional and are added at B-Line Paratransit's discretion.

- (g) Recertification of ADA Paratransit Eligibility
 B-Line Paratransit shall require recertification for eligibility of ADA paratransit eligible individuals every three years.
- (h) Recertification of Other Paratransit Customers
 B-Line Paratransit shall require recertification for eligibility of Dial-a-Ride paratransit eligible individuals every three years.

Certification Process

B-Line Paratransit staff will assess potential customers and determine eligibility of B-Line Paratransit services. The following outlines the process utilized to determine eligibility.

B-Line Paratransit certification applications may be obtained Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm at 326 Huss Lane, Suite 150, Chico, by calling B-Line Paratransit at (530) 809-4616, or by accessing the B-Line website at www.blinetransit.com and selecting the Paratransit tab. B-Line Paratransit applications will be mailed within one business day of a request. All B-Line Paratransit applications must be returned to the B-Line Paratransit office.

Applications received by B-Line Paratransit will be date-stamped, reviewed for completeness, and verified by staff. Staff will:

- confirm the accuracy of the application.
- return any incomplete applications to applicants, noting items that need to be completed or clarified.
- provide support to applicants with incomplete applications in order to complete applications correctly. However, staff is not responsible nor will staff complete applications for applicants.

B-Line Paratransit staff will determine eligibility status (i.e., unconditional, temporary, conditional, permanent) or ineligibility of an application within the 21 day parameter set by ADA Law. Staff may decide that a face to face interview of the applicant is necessary to determine eligibility. If an in-person interview is needed, B-Line Paratransit will provide transportation to and from the interview at no charge to the applicant.

In emergency situations staff may grant eligibility to applicants within a matter of days however this is the exception and not the rule.

Eligible applicants (regardless of status) will be mailed a letter with their identification number for B-Line Paratransit as well as any conditions for use that may apply.

Ineligible applicants will be notified in writing by mail; information advising them of their right to appeal the denial will be included (see Administrative Appeal Process) as well as information on any appropriate alternative resource.

Policy on Reservations

Paratransit service shall be provided for persons who make reservations one to seven days in advance. Reservations will be taken from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week, excluding holidays. For next day trip reservations made on holidays, an answering machine shall be available. B-Line Paratransit will accommodate a limited number of same-day requests based on available service capacity.

Policy on Scheduling

Trips shall be scheduled based on the rider's request to be picked up at a particular time. A scheduled 30-minute ready-time window will be communicated to the passenger at the time the reservation is made. All service is shared ride. Scheduling of trips will allow time for others to board and ride. Trips will be confirmed at the time scheduled.

B-Line Paratransit may offer travel times one hour before or one hour after the requested travel time as established under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 service criteria.

Policy on On-time Service

Scheduling for shared rides often prevents exact adherence to a scheduled pick-up time. Therefore, the vehicle will be considered to be "on-time" if it arrives to pick up the passenger any time within the 30-minute ready-time window. Riders must be ready at the beginning of their ready-time window. Riders may board as soon as the vehicle arrives and must board within five minutes of the arrival of the vehicle. However, riders will not be obligated to board before the beginning of their ready-time window.

Example:

Passenger requested pick-up time 9:00 am
Ready-time window assigned by dispatcher 8:45am-9:15am
If the vehicle arrives before 8:45 am, the passenger may board upon arrival, but must board by 8:50 am (five minutes after beginning of ready-time window), beginning with assistance from the door if needed.

If the vehicle arrives between 8:45 am and 9:15 am, the passenger may board upon arrival of the vehicle, but must board within five minutes of the arrival of the vehicle.

A delay in boarding by the passenger of more than 5 minutes after the arrival of the vehicle within its established ready-time window may result in being considered a "No Show" (see policy on Cancellations). Riders will not be assigned a "No Show" if

the vehicle arrives after the ready-time window, and the rider refuses the ride due to vehicle tardiness.

Late Trips

If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the 30-minute ready-time window, riders are advised to call B-Line Paratransit at (530) 342-0221 (Chico/Paradise) or 1-800-822-8145 (toll free) in order to inquire about the status of the trip.

Travel Time

Travel time on B-Line Paratransit is comparable to the amount of time it would take to make the same trip using fixed-route bus service with connections. The average trip length is about 45 minutes, and a trip may exceed or fall below that average depending on the circumstances.

Policy on Service Area

Certified ADA Paratransit riders are entitled to service to all points within B-Line Paratransit's defined service area. ADA and Dial-a-Ride service is provided within the mandated ADA boundary. (See Appendix C)

B-Line also offers supplemental service to areas up to three miles outside the ADA boundaries at an additional cost and on a time-and-space available basis. Three one-mile zones that extend progressively further from the ADA core boundary have been identified for each service area (i.e., Chico, Oroville and Paradise).

Zone 1 begins at the border of the ADA core service area and extends for one mile. The fare for this zone is two and one half $(2\frac{1}{2})$ times the basic ADA fare.

Zone 2 begins at the outer border of zone 1 and continues an additional mile, so that it extends two-miles outside the ADA core service area. The fare for this zone is \$2.00 more than the zone 1 fare.

Zone 3 begins at the outer border of zone 2 and continues an additional mile, so that it extends three-miles outside the ADA core service area. The fare for this zone is \$4.00 more than the zone 1 fare.

It should be pointed out that although an area may fall within one of the supplemental service zones, for service to be provided, there must be a direct, easily accessible route from the core service area. A good example of where this comes into play is the east side of Paradise. Although Yankee Hill is within the zone 3 boundary, there is no direct route from the Paradise core area, so it would not be eligible for supplemental service.

A passenger will only be charged for one supplemental zone per one-way trip regardless of whether he/she travels through multiple fare zones. The fee will be based upon the furthest zone traveled in/through during that one-way trip.

All service in the supplemental service zones is above and beyond what is required by ADA law and is thus considered Dial-a-Ride service. This service will only be provided to the extent that it does not impact ADA service in the core service area.

Policy on Driver Assistance

B-Line Paratransit is a door-to-door, shared-ride service that complements B-Line fixed-route bus services. Door-to-door assistance will be provided to assist riders only to the extent necessary to get to the vehicle and to board, disembark, or stow a limited amount of personal belongings.

Door-to-door service shall be provided for passengers requiring assistance. However, drivers must, for safety reasons, stay within the "line of sight" of their vehicle. Passengers cannot be escorted past the ground floor lobby or threshold of any residence or public building beyond the driver's line of sight. If a rider needs a passenger lift to board a vehicle, the driver will assist. All drivers are trained to operate the lift.

Drivers may assist riders when entering and exiting the vehicle as requested. Drivers may also assist passengers to and from the main door of their origin or destination, for passengers who require this assistance. This includes:

- Identifying themselves to the passenger as B-Line Paratransit and by their name;
- Offering a steadying arm or other appropriate guidance or assistance when walking;
- Assistance on stairs for ambulatory (non-wheelchair using) passengers;
- Assisting wheelchair users to and from the main door of the building or residence; or,
- Assisting wheelchair users on ramps to and from the main door of their origin or destination.

The driver may also assist with a reasonable number of packages, defined as the amount the driver can carry in one trip from the vehicle to the door (for example, two grocery sized bags or a collapsible shopping cart with bags in it).

In addition to the above mentioned packages the driver may assist with, passengers may bring any number of packages that they and/or their companions or Personal Care Attendants can handle and can be reasonably and safely accommodated in the vehicle, space permitting.

Apartments/Office Complexes

When riders schedule a trip, they must provide the dispatcher with a specific building name and number within the complex. The operator will pick up the rider at that specific building. If a rider's building is located within a gated community and requires special entry, the rider must arrange entry for the Paratransit vehicle before pick-up time (See Policy on Accessible Origins and Destinations).

Nursing Homes

Riders with pick-ups at nursing homes should meet the operator in front of the main lobby. Operators are not permitted to go to rooms to pick up riders. Operators cannot assist riders in and out of a nursing home. Nursing home staff should be ready to assist the individual out if necessary. Riders will be dropped off in front of the main lobby of the nursing home.

Adult Program/Day Care Centers

Riders attending adult programs or day care centers should be ready when Paratransit vehicles arrive. Operators cannot assist riders into or out of adult program/day care centers. Center staff must be ready to assist the individual out of the center, if necessary.

If the adult program/day care center requires special entry, center staff should arrange entry for the Paratransit vehicle before pick-up time. If the rider or staff does not arrange entry, and the vehicle is unable to enter the pick-up area, the rider will be considered a No-Show.

Policy on Personal Care Attendants and Companions

Personal Care Attendant (PCA)

A personal care attendant (PCA) is defined as someone designated or employed specifically to help the eligible individual meet his or her personal needs. The origin and destination of the PCA must be the same as the rider's. A PCA may accompany a registered B-Line Paratransit rider at no additional charge. A rider must indicate at the time of application whether he or she travels with a PCA. When making a reservation, the rider must indicate if the PCA will be accompanying the rider on that trip.

Companions

One fare paying companion in addition to a PCA may accompany a rider to and from the same origin and destination. Riders must reserve space for the companion, whether adult or child, when scheduling their trip. Seating for more than one companion is on a "space available" basis when scheduling trips. Children age 5 and under travel free and must be accompanied by an eligible adult.

Policy on Service Animals and Non-Service Animals

Service animals are permitted on all B-Line Paratransit vehicles and are allowed to accompany passengers. The rider is strongly encouraged to tell the dispatcher that he or she will be traveling with a service animal when the rider schedules the trip.

Animals other than service animals may travel on B-Line Paratransit only in a properly secured cage or container and will be considered as a package. If assistance is needed in carrying the animal, the policy on assistance with packages will apply (See Policy on Driver Assistance).

Policy on Fares

To receive service, all riders and each of their companions must pay a fare upon boarding. Only PCAs (as defined in the Policy on Personal Care Attendants) are <u>not</u> required to pay a fare. Riders can pay with cash (Note: drivers cannot make change) or B-Line passes. All eligible riders, regardless of age, must pay full fare when boarding.

Fares are determined by policy of the Butte County Association of Governments Board of Directors.

Policy on Transporting Life Support Equipment

Passengers may travel with respirators, portable oxygen, and other life support equipment. Such transport must not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. Such equipment must be of a size which can be reasonably accommodated in paratransit vehicles (for example, equipment that could also be transported on a fixed-route bus).

Policy on Accessible Origins and Destinations

Service to or from inaccessible origins or destinations will be provided at curbside instead of to the door if no safe access exists. In this instance, accompaniment by a PCA is strongly advised. The Service Provider shall determine if a location is unsafe or inaccessible based on existing program guidelines. The Service Provider shall notify passengers requesting a reservation to or from this address of the determination and suggested alternatives for boarding locations nearby.

If a pick-up address is located inside a gated community or requires special access, it is the rider's responsibility to arrange entry for the B-Line Paratransit vehicle. If a vehicle is unable to enter the pick-up area and the rider fails to meet the vehicle, the rider will be considered a No Show for the trip (See Policy on Rider Cancellations and No Shows).

Policy on Wheelchairs or Other Mobility Devices

B-Line Paratransit shall accommodate standard wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility devices. Wheelchairs are defined as a 3 or 4 wheeled mobility aid that does not exceed the ADA guidelines of 48" in length, 30" in width and 600 lbs. when occupied. Mobility devices larger than these standards and/or cannot be secured properly may be denied service aboard B-Line Paratransit vehicles. Wheelchairs shall be secured at all times during boarding, disembarking and transport operations. For safety reasons, passengers are strongly encouraged to have working brakes on their mobility device. Passengers who use scooter-type wheelchairs who are capable of transferring to a vehicle seat are strongly urged to do so during transport. It is the rider's choice to transfer or remain in his or her mobility device. Passengers who need the lift to board but are not wheelchair users may use the lift in a standing position.

All riders are strongly encouraged to use the shoulder belts and lap belts provided in the vehicle.

If a rider is traveling with a child who is 6 years of age or younger, or weighs 60 pounds or less, B-Line Paratransit requires that the child be secured in a child safety seat. B-Line Paratransit does not provide child safety seats for children.

Policy on Subscription Service

Subscription service is limited to riders traveling to the same place at the same time at least once a week for a minimum period of 90 days. B-Line Paratransit reserves the right to restrict and/or prioritize subscription service to maintain a maximum level of fifty percent (50%) of available capacity on the total system at any given time, unless there is excess demand capacity available.

Policy on Rider Cancellations and No Shows

Passengers must cancel unwanted trips, whether demand or subscription service, by 5:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip. Trips canceled by 5:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip will be counted as Advance Cancellations. A documented pattern of Same Day Cancellations, No Shows or Excessive Advance Cancellations for reasons within the passenger's control will result in service denial as prescribed under the Policy on Suspension of Service below.

Excessive Advance Cancellations

Excessive Advance Cancellations occur when a rider cancels 50% or more of his or her scheduled trips during any one-month period. A minimum of 10 trips must be scheduled for the 30 days in question for this policy to apply.

Same Day Cancellations

A Same Day Cancellation occurs when a rider cancels a scheduled trip between 5 p.m. the day prior to the trip and up to two hours before the scheduled pick-up time.

No Shows

A No Show occurs when a rider fails to board the Paratransit vehicle within 5 minutes after it arrives within the ready-time window, or when a trip is not cancelled at least two hours before the scheduled time.

Policy on Suspension of Service

Passengers must not engage in activities or conduct resulting in misuse of the system, or unnecessarily reserve and/or use space that could otherwise be utilized by people who need service. Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to:

- Failing to show up for scheduled rides (No Shows)
- Providing Same Day Cancellations and/or Excessive Advance Cancellations
- Engaging in disruptive behavior
- Failing to pay a fare on a repeated basis

Suspensions shall not be proposed or implemented for circumstances which are beyond the passenger's control. A suspension shall be imposed as described below for a documented pattern of misuse, within the passenger's control within any one-month period. Examples of situations <u>not</u> within the passenger's control are:

- A sudden personal emergency
- Sudden or worsening illness
- A late vehicle arrival
- Breakdowns of mobility aids
- A natural occurrence/disaster

Service Suspension for No Shows and Excessive Cancellations

Because No Shows prevent other passengers from obtaining rides, an accumulation of three (3) No Shows within a one-month period will result in suspension of service.

For each one-month period where excessive cancellation has taken place, the following penalties shall be assessed for No Shows and Excessive Cancellations:

<u>Occurrence</u> Penalty

First Verbal reminder to rider Second Written warning to rider

Third Seven day suspension of service
Fourth Fourteen day suspension of service
Thirty day suspension of service

After a third occurrence, determined to be within the passenger's control, B-Line Paratransit shall send the passenger a letter identifying the suspension period and the reasons for the suspension. Any occurrence beyond 5 in a rolling 12 month period will be subject to a 30 day suspension of service.

Appeals must be made within 60 days of notification of the suspension. Passengers who appeal a suspension may continue to ride pending a decision on the appeal. If the appeal is denied, the suspension shall be imposed effective the date the appeal is denied, pending final notification to the passenger.

Penalties for Same Day Cancellations

For every three (3) Same Day Cancellations, a rider shall be charged one (1) No Show. A service suspension of 7 days shall be imposed if a rider accumulates three (3) No Shows in a one-month period as indicated above.

Service Suspension for Excessive Advance Cancellations

A service suspension of seven (7) days shall be imposed on demand service riders who exceed the maximum cancellation allowances (See Policy on Rider Cancellations and No Shows – Excessive Advance Cancellations). Additional occurrences within a rolling 12 month period will be subject to the same rules as No Show Suspensions. In addition to the service suspension, loss of subscription service privileges shall be imposed on subscription riders who exceed the maximum cancellation allowance prescribed under this policy.

Service Suspension for Violent, Seriously Disruptive and/or Illegal Conduct Service shall immediately be denied for 30 days or until an appeal hearing is held, to passengers who engage in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct. (See Policy on Service Suspension). This includes, but is not limited to:

- Threats of physical harm to other passengers, drivers or other service personnel
- Physical assault or battery on driver or other passengers
- Verbal abuse, intimidation or altercation with driver or other passengers
- Unlawful harassment of driver or other passengers, including, but not limited to unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations
- Unauthorized use of or willful damage to vehicle equipment
- Repeatedly violating riding rules, including smoking on the vehicle, standing while the vehicle is in motion, eating or drinking on the vehicle without valid medical reason, defacing equipment or refusing to comply with other service requirements specified in the policies included in this document
- Failing to maintain reasonably acceptable personal hygiene standards which could interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle by the driver or with the use of the service by other passengers
- Any other criminal conduct defined in and/or prohibited by the California Penal Code

Riders who exhibit violent, seriously disruptive and/or illegal behavior may be suspended from service immediately for 30 days (from the date when the incident occurred) pending an appeal. The rider shall be contacted by B-Line Paratransit Administration to investigate the alleged situation or incident. If B-Line Paratransit Administration determines the rider's behavior to be disruptive or violent, the rider shall be sent a written notice by B-Line Paratransit explaining the reasons for the suspension.

The person shall have 60 days from the date of notice of the proposed suspension to submit to B-Line Paratransit a request for an appeal. He or she (or their representative) shall include a written explanation as to why the suspension should not be imposed. Riders appealing a suspension based on seriously disruptive or violent behavior <u>may not</u> continue to ride until B-Line Paratransit Administration appeals issues a written decision on the case.

Disruptive behavior which is determined to be due to a disability of the rider may not result in a suspension. However, B-Line Paratransit may require the rider to travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) if it is established that the rider's behavior poses a significant potential threat of harm to other passengers or to the paratransit driver.

If such disruptive behavior continues and the required PCA is unable to prevent further instances of such behavior so that the rider continues to present a potential safety problem, service for the rider may be discontinued.

Policy on Appeal of Service Suspension

Before suspending service B-Line Paratransit shall take the following steps:

- Notify the individual in writing that B-Line Paratransit plans to suspend service, citing the specific reasons for the planned suspension and setting forth the proposed sanction.
- Provide the individual an opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments. This is an informal process with B-Line Paratransit administrative staff.
- Provide the individual with written notification of the decision and the reasons for it.

If it is determined by B-Line Paratransit that a suspension of service is warranted, B-Line Paratransit will issue a notice of suspension. The Service Provider or B-Line Paratransit Administration shall provide the passenger with a copy of B-Line Paratransit's Administrative Appeal Process (See Appendix B). Any rider whose service is suspended may appeal the decision. Appeals on suspension of service shall be directed to B-Line Paratransit Administration in writing.

Appeals must be received by B-Line Paratransit Administration within 60 calendar days from the date of the written notice of suspension. The Service Provider shall forward to B-Line Paratransit Administration written documentation on the events leading to the suspension. Failure to submit a timely appeal as defined in this section will result in a forfeiture of the rider's right to pursue an appeal.

Once an appeal is submitted in writing to B-Line Paratransit Administration, the rider may continue to ride B-Line Paratransit pending an appeals hearing. However, riders appealing a suspension based on seriously disruptive or violent behavior <u>may not</u> continue to ride until the appeals panel issues a written decision on the case (See Policy on Suspension of Service).

Policy on Customer Complaints

All rider comments, both positive and negative, will be considered by B-Line Paratransit Administration. Customers may send their comments to the Administration office by mail, fax, email or phone. Comments can be directed to:

Butte County Association of Governments Butte Regional Transit 326 Huss Lane, Suite 150 Chico, CA 95928

> Phone (530) 809-4616 Fax (530) 879-2444 Email vproctor@bcag.org

Every complaint will be reviewed within 14 calendar days of receipt and responded to as needed. Resolution of urgent complaints will occur within five calendar days. When filing a customer complaint, riders are encouraged to provide:

- The rider's name, address and telephone number;
- Date and time of the incident; and,
- Specific details of the incident.

Rider confidentiality will be protected upon a customer's request when investigating and resolving complaints. Anonymous service complaints, however, cannot be responded to.

APPENDIX A Eligibility Forms



Overview - Services Available

B-Line ADA Paratransit provides curb-to-curb transportation service in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). This service is provided to individuals who, because of a physical or mental disability, are unable to use the regular Fixed Route bus service in Butte County. The purpose of this application is to provide an opportunity for you to describe how your disability prevents you from riding the B-Line Fixed Route bus system, and in doing so apply for B-Line ADA Paratransit. Age, distance from a bus stop or inability to drive are conditions which are not taken into consideration in making an eligibility determination.

Travel Training

If you are interested in receiving free travel training to learn how to use our regular Fixed Route buses, please call 530-809-4616 for information.

B-Line must have the completed Paratransit Eligibility Application including the Healthcare/Social Service Release of Information portion to begin the determination of eligibility. We will return the application to you if we are missing any signatures or other information.

In accordance with ADA regulations, a determination of eligibility will be made within 21 calendar days after receipt of your **completed** application.

B-Line Paratransit 326 Huss Drive, Suite #150, Chico, CA 95928

Phone: (530) 809-4616 Fax: (530) 891-2979 Web: www.BLineTransit.com

Personal/Contact Information New Applicant Renewal **Last Name** First Name MI Street Address: Apt/Bldg # City: State: Zip Code: Home Phone: Work or Cell Phone: Date of Birth Gender: **Email Address:** ☐ Female _ Male ∐ No ∐ Yes Do you need a Personal Care Attendant? ☐ For Certain Trips Checking Yes on Personal Care Attendant means you need someone to travel with you in order to successfully complete a trip. A PCA is not provided to you; it is your responsibility to bring one and they travel free of charge. Yes No Did you require assistance with this paratransit application process o will you need assistance with future correspondence/recertification? If yes, to whom should important correspondence be mailed? Last Name First Name Contact Phone: Secondary Contact Mailing Address: Relationship to Applicant: Please provide the name and telephone number of someone we can call in case of an emergency: Last Name Contact Phone: First Name Office Use Only (Do Not Write in this Box) ID# Expiration Date: Date Received: Date Issued: Eligibility Category: Certifier: Comments:

Disability/Health– Related Information							
Please answer the following questions in detail. Your answers will help us in determining your eligibility.							
1.	What is your medical condition(s)/disability?						
2.	How does it prevent you	fror	n using the B-Line fixed	route	e bus?		
	Date of onset/when your Please read the following		-	one th	hat best describes your		
	disability: I have a temporary disability and will only need paratransit service		I have difficulty remembering all of the things I have to do to		I am able to ride the city bus independently.		
	until I recover. I have a visual disability which prevents me from using the city bus. I can use the city bus for some trips but not		use the city bus. I have a disability that causes me to have Good Days/Bad Days. I believe I can learn to ride the city bus if		I can never use the city bus by myself.		
5.	others. Please indicate if you use	e an	someone taught me. y of the following mobil	ity aic	ds/equipment:		
	I do not require any assistive devices Manual Wheelchair Power/Electric		Service Animal White Cane Cane		Communication Board Picture/Alphabet Board Prosthesis		
	Wheelchair Sport Wheelchair Scooter Segway		Walker Crutches Portable Oxygen		Leg Braces Other (describe)		
	I understand that if my r the combined weight of will not be able to ride B	the	applicant and the devic		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		

Ability to Use Regular (Fixed Route) B-Line Buses					
All regular fixed route buses have wheelchair lifts, handrails and kneelers (steps that lower to curb level) or ramps for ease in boarding.					
6. Do you use the regular fixed route bus INDEPENDENTLY? ☐ Yes/Sometimes ☐ No					
7. When is the last time you independently used the fixed route bus? In the past month In the past five years In the past year In the past ten years					
8. Are there certain days/times you can use the fixed route bus but not others? Yes Sometimes Don't know If you have chosen Yes/Sometimes, please explain:					
II you have chosen res/sometimes, please explain.					
9. How would you describe the terrain where you live (e.g. flat, hilly, dirt roads, lack of sidewalks, etc.)?					
10. How far from your home is the nearest public bus stop? Less than 1 block					
11. Have you ever successfully completed travel training? Yes No If you have chosen Yes, please elaborate with time frames & dates:					
12. Do you have hearing problems that would prevent you from using a fixed route bus? Yes No If you have chosen Yes, please explain:					
13. Do you have a breathing problem that would prevent you from using a fixed route bus? Yes No If you have chosen Yes, please explain:					

14. Do you have a memory problem that would prevent you from using a fixed route					
bus?					
If you have chosen Yes, please	explain:				
15. Do you have a balance problem that would prevent you from using a fixed route bus? Yes No If you have chosen Yes, please explain:					
16. Do you have a visual prob	olem that would prevent you fr	om using fixed route bus?			
☐ Yes ☐ No If you have chosen Yes, please explain:					
17. Do you have a problem independently crossing the street? Yes No If you have chosen Yes, please explain:					
18. How far can you travel on your own or when using a mobility aid? I can get to the curb in front of my home I can travel up to ½ mile (3 blocks) I can travel up to ½ mile (6 blocks) I can travel up to ¾ mile (9 blocks) I can travel further than ¾ mile					
19. Do any of the following ba	arriers prevent you from using	the bus?			
☐ Cold ☐ Snow ☐ Lack of Sidewalks ☐ Good/Bad Day	☐ Heat☐ Night Blindness☐ Lack of curb cuts☐ Unable to transfer buses	☐ Rain ☐ Hills ☐ Bus stop not accessible ☐ Light sensitivity (sunny, overcast, etc.)			
 Unable to walk/wheel 50 feet (1 block) Unable to walk/wheel ¾ mile (9 blocks) Air Pollution (pollen – allergies) 	☐ Unable to walk/wheel ¼ mile (3 blocks)☐ Lack of strength and endurance (hyperfatigue)☐ None	 Unable to walk/wheel ½ mile (6 blocks) Uneven travel path (dirt road, potholes, etc.) 			

HIPAA Release Form

This is giving your healthcare or social services office permission to speak to B-Line about your disability and functional mobility.

Please complete all sections of this HIPAA release form. If any sections are left blank, this form will not be accepted.
Date:
I,, give my permission for the following office to share information with Butte Regional Transit (B-Line) regarding my functional mobility and disability status:
Healthcare/Social Services Office
The reason for this disclosure is strictly for use in the paratransit application process by Butte Regional Transit Paratransit Staff. It will not be shared with anyone else. Butte Regional Transit strives to protect all passenger data and will store and dispose of any personal information in a secure manner.
This authorization is only valid until the paratransit application is processed, up to 21 days from receipt of the application. Authorization can be revoked at any time by submitting a request in writing to B-Line Paratransit at:
B-Line Paratransit
326 Huss Drive, Suite 150
Chico, CA 95928
Please sign below.
X
Applicant Signature
If you are filling this form out for someone else, please indicate your legal ability to sign for the applican in the space below:



Dial-a-Ride Application

Dial-a-Ride Senior Services (70+)

Verification of age and residency are all that is needed for use of Dial-a-Ride services for seniors. A photocopy of proof of age *MUST* be provided with application. Documents accepted; an official State Identification/Driver's License, Birth Certificate, Passport or any other State or Federal issued identification. Applications based on age will not be reviewed without a valid ID.

** Please call (530) 809-4616 if you are interested in receiving free travel training to learn how to use the city bus (this will not affect Dial-a-Ride eligibility)

Applicant Name	Telephone	Telephone			
Address	City	Zip Code			
Date of Birth					
	Care Attendant to travel with you in order toCertain Trips	successfully complete a			
Do you use a Mobility Devic	ee? (wheelchair, etc.) YesNo)			
If answered yes above, spec	cify type				
	ernate or emergency contact information, plPhone or Address:				
	that the above information is true and correct. If rect, I understand that my B-Line Dial-a-Ride se				
Applicant Signature	Date				
PLEASE RETURN COMPLET APPLICATION TO:	TED B-Line Paratransi 326 Huss Drive, Su				

For questions please call (530) 809-4616

Office Use Only (Do Not Write Below this Line)
Client ID: Certifier:
Date Issued: Expiration Date:

Date Received: Eligibility Finding:

Chico, CA 95928 -Or- FAX TO: (530) 891-2979

APPENDIX BAdministrative Appeals Process

Introduction

Pursuant to US Department of Transportation regulations implementing ADA paratransit requirements (USC 49 Part 37 Subpart F, Section 37.125), B-Line will accept appeals regarding its determinations of eligibility. Applicants for ADA paratransit or customers of B-Line Paratransit Service may appeal:

- 1. A determination that an applicant is not eligible for B-Line ADA paratransit services;
- 2. The conditions placed upon eligibility for use of B-Line ADA paratransit services;
- 3. The application of conditional eligibility to any particular trip request.
- 4. Service suspensions

These procedures will be referenced in every letter of determination denying or conditioning eligibility or suspending B-Line services.

1. Filing an Appeal

- **a.** All appeals must be filed in writing with the B-Line Administrative office.
- **b.** Appeals must be filed within sixty (60) calendar days of the receipt of the original determination of ineligibility or conditional eligibility, suspension or denial of a specific request. If the 60th day after the original determination or trip denial is on a weekend or legal holiday, an appeal will be accepted on the following business day.
- c. Appellants are urged to state in their appeal letter the reasons why they believe the determination does not accurately reflect their ability to use B-Line fixed route service, or why suspension is inappropriate. Written material regarding the specific functional ability of the applicant/customer or relating to the general nature of the individual's disability may by submitted at this time, or requested by staff. This will assist B-Line reviewers in their initial review of the appeal. An appellant may, however, request an appeal hearing without providing additional detail and without the submission of additional written material or information.

2. Receipt and Scheduling of an Appeal Hearing

- **a.** Upon receipt, all appeals will be date-stamped and referred to the Appeals Committee. The committee may choose to:
 - i. reverse a determination of ineligibility or revise condition of eligibility;
 - ii. authorize a specific trip request which had been denied;
 - iii. provide the opportunity for and/or schedule a hearing by the Appeals Committee; or
 - iv. cancel or modify a suspension of service.
- **b.** Appeal hearings will normally be completed within the calendar month following the receipt of the appeal.

3. Review Hearing Procedures

- **a.** Copies of the original application submitted by the appellant, including medical verification, and any additional material submitted by the applicant in filing the appeal, will be provided to the B-Line Appeals Committee at least three (3) business days in advance of the appeal hearing.
- b. The Appeals Committee will be composed of two members of BCAG staff and a member of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) when considering eligibility appeals, and two members of BCAG staff when considering suspension appeals. Committee members shall not be involved in the initial eligibility or suspension determinations. The committee shall hear and consider:
 - i. The information provided in the original application and through the medical verification;
 - ii. Any additional information, written or verbal, received from the appellant;
 - iii. Any report by B-Line eligibility staff;
 - iv. The statements of the appellant, his/her advocate and any other witnesses offered by the appellant;
 - v. Information from B-Line staff and the Contract Operator regarding its services, the architectural or other barriers impacting access to fixed route service or other eligibility criteria; and
 - **vi.** Any other material deemed by the Appeals Committee to be germane to the consideration of the appellant's ability to utilize B-Line fixed route service.
- **c.** After it has received, reviewed and considered the material presented as part of the appeal process, the Appeals Committee shall render a decision and prepare a letter to the appellant regarding its determinations. The Committee will specify, and the letter shall explain in detail, the reasons for the maintenance, modification or reversal of the matter(s) of the appeal.
- **d.** The B-Line Appeals Committee will render its determination within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the appeal hearing. If the Committee determines that it must delay a decision in order to obtain further information regarding the appeal, USDOT regulations pertaining to presumptive eligibility will apply.

4. Interim Service

- **a.** During the period between the receipt of an appeal of an initial determination regarding eligibility and the determination of the Appeals Committee, no ADA paratransit service will be provided to the applicant. Services may be provided through other B-Line transportation programs pursuant to the regulations of those programs.
- **b.** If an appeal is taken based upon a suspension of service for any reason other than violent or threatening behavior, service will be provided until an appeal hearing is concluded.
- **c.** If an appeal is taken based upon a suspension of service for violent or threatening behavior, service will <u>not</u> be provided during the appeal process.

d. If the Appeals Committee has not rendered its decision within thirty (30) calendar days of the hearing, service will be provided on an interim basis pending final determination by the Committee.

5. Privacy of Appellants

- **a.** All Appeals Committee copies of appellants' applications and supporting materials remain the property of B-Line and will be returned to the ADA Coordinator at the conclusion of the appeal hearing. All documentation will be kept in a confidential manner.
- b. Members of the Appeals Committee are strictly prohibited from discussing the details of an appeal or regarding the name or other identifying characteristics of the appellant with any person not directly involved in the appeal. Members may discuss information of a general sort regarding a particular type of disability and its functional impact upon an individual's ability to use fixed route transit services in preparation for a hearing, but are advised to take care that information regarding specific appellants is not shared.
- **c.** All hearings will be conducted in private session. Only the Committee members, B-Line staff, the appellant and his/her advocate and witnesses as necessary for the conduct of the hearing will be in attendance.
- **d.** The deliberations of the Appeals Committee shall normally be conducted in private in order to allow for the full consideration of the appellant's medical records and condition.

6. Title VI Complaint Process for Discrimination

- a. Butte Regional Transit (B-Line) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in the receipt of its services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, or any other characteristics protected by law, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Further, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, no entity shall discriminate against an individual with a physical or mental disability in connection with the provision of transportation service.
- **b.** To obtain more information on BRT's nondiscrimination obligations or to file a complaint, contact Butte Regional Transit, Attention Title VI Administrator, 326 Huss Drive Suite 150, Chico, CA 95928. For questions or further assistance, please call (530) 879-2468.
- **c.** Information on non-English alternative formats may be obtained from the BRT office.

APPENDIX C B-Line ADA Paratransit Service Area Maps





