

Chicago Transit Authority

CTA Accessible

Buses and Trains

March 2006



www.transitchicago.com

take it everywhere.™

The Chicago Transit Authority welcomes customers with disabilities and has been making steady progress toward a bus and rail system that is accessible to all.

The CTA is committed to removing barriers that prevent customers with disabilities from using our main service. As of April 29, 2005, CTA reached 100 percent accessibility on all of its bus routes. All CTA buses are equipped with lifts or ramps.

On the rail system, 88 percent of the train cars have accessible doors and each train has a minimum of two accessible cars. There are at least 72 rail stations with elevators or ramps. Plans are well underway for additional accessible stations on the Brown and Red lines.

While no bus or train system can be accessible unless physical barriers that prevent customers with disabilities from boarding and riding are removed, the CTA recognizes that its employees — including bus and rail operators and Customer Assistants — are essential in making the transit system accessible.

Working with its ADA Advisory Committee and other experts on disability issues, the CTA has been improving its policies

and procedures to better address the needs of customers with disabilities.

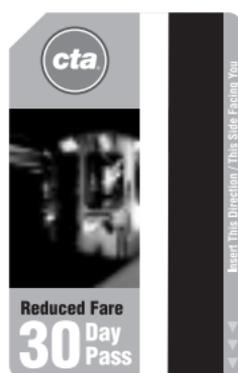
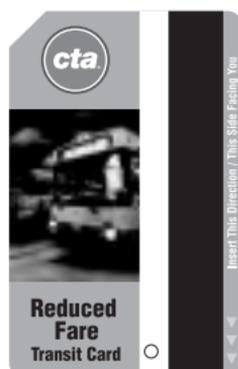
One hundred percent accessibility on buses provides transit freedom to people with disabilities who have been prevented in the past from riding the bus.

The freedom to get on any bus and ride to any destination — work, school, shopping, medical appointments, recreation — without the pre-planning required by paratransit is a benefit that should be enjoyed by everyone possible within the CTA service area.

General Information

Customers with disabilities and senior citizens can ride CTA buses and trains at half the regular fare by obtaining a Reduced Fare Riding Permit from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). Contact the RTA at (312) 836-7000 (phone); (312) 836-4949 (TTY), or by e-mail at communications@rtachicago.org

These permits can be used as magnetic farecards capable of storing value, or



just as identification cards when paying cash or using a separate reduced fare card (available as pay-per-ride or 30-day passes).

If a person's disability prevents the use of a regular Transit Card, the RTA will provide a "smart card" — similar to the CTA's Chicago Card™ — which will register the fare just by holding it near the touchpad on the bus farebox or the rail station turnstile.

To help plan a public transit trip with a fully accessible route, contact the RTA's Travel Information Center at the numbers on page 2. The travel information phone lines are staffed from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. daily, while the computerized version of this service is available online at tripsweb.rtachicago.com.

A person with a disability who has little or no experience riding a CTA bus or train and would like some training or assistance for that first ride can contact the CTA at 1-888-YOUR-CTA (968-7282); at the TTY number 1-888-CTA-TTY1 (282-8891); or by e-mail at ctahelp@transitchicago.com. Individualized travel training will be made available to anyone requesting it.

The CTA publishes a Bus & Rail Map showing the entire bus and rail system, nearby suburban Pace routes and Metra rail lines. All accessible CTA routes and rail stations are indicated on the map, along with the days and hours of service for train and bus routes. It is available through the CTA numbers listed above or at any CTA rail station.



Copies of this brochure also are available in these alternate formats:

- audio cassette
- large print
- Braille
- computer disk

To request this brochure in any alternate format, contact the CTA at the numbers above.

All accessible buses and rail cars are marked with the international symbol of accessibility.

CTA Fares

Full fare to ride a CTA bus is \$2.00 in cash or \$1.75 with a Transit Card, Chicago Card or Chicago Card Plus. The full fare for rail is \$2.00 with a Transit Card or \$1.75 with a Chicago Card or Chicago Card Plus.

Using any type of transit card will also provide two additional rides within two hours for 25 cents more. Transfers are no longer issued when paying with cash.

The reduced fare for customers with disabilities is \$1.00 if paid in cash or 85 cents when paying with a Reduced Fare Permit or Reduced Fare Transit Card. With either of these cards, the two hour transfer period is 15 cents for up to two additional rides.

If the identification number on an RTA Reduced Fare Riding Permit starts with the letter P, for Paratransit, a personal care attendant also can ride at the reduced fare when accompanying the permit holder.



Riding a CTA Bus

A customer with a disability should wait at any bus stop on an accessible route with a farecard or exact change. All CTA buses are equipped with lifts or ramps.

When paying the reduced fare, the RTA Reduced Fare Permit must be shown to the bus operator.



As the bus doors open, ask the operator to deploy the lift or ramp if needed. No explanation is necessary, even for a customer whose disability is not apparent. CTA policy is for the lift or ramp to be used at any customer's request, not just for customers using wheelchairs or other assistive devices. In fact, the lift or ramp also must be deployed for customers without disabilities if so requested.

On a bus equipped with a lift rather than a ramp, two adults should not use it at the same time due to weight limitations (600 lbs. is the maximum under ADA guidelines). An adult accompanying a customer using a mobility device can board or exit through the rear door of the bus if necessary to assist someone from the lift.

Once on board, pay the fare with a Transit Card or cash; the bus operator will assist in this procedure only if requested.

A customer using a wheelchair or other mobility device should ask the bus operator for help, if needed, to use the securement system. CTA policy is for each customer to decide how much or little assistance is needed. Though up to each customer, riding secured on a bus is strongly recommended for safety reasons.

Even if securement is declined, a customer using a wheelchair or other mobility device must ride in the priority seating area so the bus aisle remains clear. Many buses now have space for two wheelchairs at the same time.

If unfamiliar with use of the stop request signal in the priority seating area, ask the bus operator to demonstrate its use when boarding.

CTA policy is for each upcoming bus stop to be announced, whether or not someone with a disability is on board. The stops must be announced either through the public address system or audibly enough to be heard from all sections of the vehicle.

All buses are equipped with an audio/visual system that uses global positioning satellite technology to automatically announce each upcoming bus stop, both audibly and on a signboard. This system includes exterior announcements that identify the bus route and its destination as the front doors are opened.

When the bus reaches the destination stop, ask the operator to disconnect the securement system if such assistance is needed.

There are times when a bus will be too crowded to board or where customers already in the priority seating (who may or may not have disabilities of their own) decline to move. A bus operator can only request — not require — other paying customers to vacate the priority seating.

Customers with disabilities face the same option as anyone else when a bus

arrives without room to board — wait for the next one. However, in the great majority of cases, other customers will move or stand when a customer with a disability needs the priority seating.



Should there be any problem boarding or riding a bus — for example, if the lift or ramp is not deployed, the stops are not called in advance, etc. — please take note of the time, location and the ID number of the employee and/or the vehicle and report the circumstances to the CTA [see page 16].

Employee ID numbers are worn on employee uniforms; the ID number of the vehicle is painted above the windshield

on the inside of the bus and on all four exterior sides. The “run number” of the bus, also helpful for identification, is posted on a sign visible from the outside in the lower left corner of the windshield.



In addition, the bus ID number — in both Braille and raised numbers — is located on the panel just behind the driver, exactly 60 inches (five feet) from the floor. It also is located at the same height on the panel to the right of the rear door.

Problems should be reported immediately, so they can be investigated and corrected as quickly as possible.

Riding a CTA Train

Accessible CTA rail stations are equipped with elevators and/or ramps to help customers reach the platforms. Portable ramps, called “gap fillers,” are available to bridge the small space

between the edge of the platform and the rail car door.

To make sure the stations to be used during any trip are accessible, contact the RTA Travel Information Center or consult CTA's Bus & Rail Map or CTA's web site (www.transitchicago.com) under "Accessible Services."

If an elevator is essential to making a station accessible for a particular customer, you can make sure the elevator is in working order by calling the CTA's Elevator Status Line at 1-888-YOUR-CTA (968-7282), selecting prompt 5 from the menu. The status line is updated whenever an elevator goes in or out of service. The same information is posted in writing at each accessible rail station.

Upon arriving at a CTA rail station, seek out the Customer Assistant if using a Reduced Fare Card or wanting to enter through the accessible gate rather than a rail station turnstile.

The hours that Customer Assistants are available at each of the rail stations are posted on the CTA's web site under "Accessible Services." Security guards are available to provide assistance at other times.

If the Customer Assistant is occupied elsewhere, he or she can be summoned by the Customer Assistance Call Button near the station turnstiles. A similar Call Button is available on each rail station platform; if unfamiliar with its location, ask the Customer Assistant or rail operator to point out its location. Each rail car also has a call button to contact the rail operator.

Because Customer Assistants must help any customer with a question or concern, there may be a short delay before the employee can arrive to deploy the "gap filler." If necessary, the rail operator will perform this service.

Advising the Customer Assistant or rail operator of the destination station will help ensure the gap filler is ready to assist the customer off the train.

Customers can also use the intercom button in each rail car to notify the rail operator that the gap filler is needed at the next stop, though such a reminder is optional if the destination was communicated in advance. Each upcoming stop is announced by an automated system.

If requested, the Customer Assistant or rail operator will assist a customer to reach the securement area on the train

and lift the passenger seat; actual use of the securement devices is optional.

When a customer with a disability is on a rail station platform and needs any assistance not quickly available from an on-site CTA employee, a free call can be made to the CTA Control Center from any pay phone by dialing the "star" button (*) and the number one (1).

(TTY, dial the "star" button (*) and the number two (2).)

Select prompt 5 from the menu. The Control Center also can be reached on regular or cell phones by calling (312) 664-7200 or 1-888-YOUR-CTA.



Should an elevator not be working when a customer enters or leaves an accessible rail station, the customer should notify the Customer Assistant or the CTA Control Center. All needed assistance will be provided, including the best possible alternate route.

A sign board in the lobby of each accessible rail station is updated with the status of the elevators at all other stations.

If an alternate route is not possible or would add too much time to the trip, a paratransit van will be dispatched to help a customer with a disability who is stranded. This help is available even if the stranded customer is not currently certified for paratransit. If the customer is using a mobility device that cannot be secured on paratransit (which is required), a full-sized accessible bus will be provided.

For customers who are blind or have impaired vision, exterior announcements are made at rail stations serving more than one rail line to identify the specific route of each arriving train.

Also, for customers who are deaf or hard of hearing, an "express light" in the center of each rail car will flash if the train has been delayed and needs to bypass stations to get back on schedule. If this occurs and the customer does not notice the blinking light in time to exit, he or she can get off wherever the train does stop and ride back in the other direction to the desired station.

When reporting any problem in riding a CTA rail line, the identification number of the rail car is important to note.

It is painted on the inside and outside of the car, and is in Braille and raised numbers on the panel to the right when facing the doors, 60 inches from the floor. The “run number” of the train — also useful in identification — is posted on the front of the first car and is announced periodically over the loudspeaker.



Comments and Concerns

The CTA is committed to providing on-time, clean, safe and friendly service. We recognize that customers with disabilities often require certain equipment and employee services to eliminate barriers to using the buses and trains.

CTA’s policy is to offer assistance, but leave it up to each customer how much or how little to accept. Employees will not touch customers or their assistive devices in offering such help unless requested to do so by the customer. Anyone who needs assistance paying

the fare should request it, as CTA employees usually do not handle money or farecards.

Our efforts to improve services for customers with disabilities are never complete; the CTA is always interested in comments and suggestions on how its policies and procedures can be refined or improved to make the trains and buses even more accessible.

Here is a summary of the information resources available to customers with disabilities:

Planning a trip:

RTA Travel Information:

voice: (312) 836-7000
(5 a.m. to 1 a.m.)

TTY: (312) 836-4949

tripsweb.rtachicago.com (online)

CTA Elevator Status Line:

voice: 1-888-YOUR-CTA (968-7282)
press prompt 5 on menu

TTY: (312) 432-8070

Seeking travel training or reporting a problem:

CTA Customer Service:

voice: 1-888-YOUR-CTA (968-7282)
(7 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

TTY: 1-888-CTA-TTY 1 (282-8891)

ctahelp@transitchicago.com (e-mail)

Applying for RTA Reduced Fare Permit:

RTA Services:

voice: (312) 836-7000

TTY: (312) 836-4949

www.rtachicago.org (online)

Emergency assistance at rail stations:

CTA Control Center:

(312) 664-7200

(prompt 5 on menu);

from rail station pay phones,

*dial *1 (no coins needed);*

TTY dial *2

Obtaining this brochure or any other CTA publications in alternate formats:

CTA Customer Service:

voice: 1-888-YOUR-CTA (968-7282)

TTY: 1-888-CTA-TTY 1 (282-8891)

e-mail: ctahelp@transitchicago.com

For listings of accessible bus routes and rail stations, Customer Assistant hours and descriptions of all CTA services for customers with disabilities, visit our web site at www.transitchicago.com and select "Accessible Services."

Contact the CTA at the above numbers or addresses to obtain the information in any needed accessible format.