



# Rider's Guide

## April 2021



## **What Is ACT-Connect™?**

ACT-Connect™ is public transportation for citizens who are functionally unable to use accessible Fixed Route buses. ACT-Connect™ service acts as a complementary service for people with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Amarillo City Transit (ACT) has established a curbside service as the basic paratransit service mode but offers door to door service for those who request it. The service is operated by Amarillo City Transit on the same days and times as fixed route service.

## **Origin to Destination – Assistance to the Door**

Upon request ACT-Connect™ service can be provided from origin-to-destination. Although ACT has established a curbside service as the basic service delivery method, measures will be taken to make sure passengers are able to travel from their origin-to-destination, beyond the curbside if needed.

To ensure adequate assistance will be available, passengers should let the dispatcher know that additional assistance will be needed for their trip at the time they make a reservation for ACT-Connect™. This will give ACT ample time to evaluate how to best meet the needs and attempt to foresee any problems that may occur during the trip.

## **What Holidays Are Observed?**

ACT-Connect™ does not operate on the following holidays:

New Year's Day  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day

## **What Is The ACT-Connect™ Service Area?**

ACT-Connect™ will provide service to eligible individuals with trip origins and destinations inside the ADA service area. The ADA service area is defined as any area within ¾ mile of an ACT fixed route.

ACT-Connect™ will provide service to eligible individuals with trip origins and destinations beyond the ¾ mile from the fixed-route bus service west of Lakeside Drive. Service is provided from 6:15 a.m to 7:00 p.m Monday through Saturday.

## **What Types of Trips Can I Make On ACT-Connect™?**

Most ACT-Connect™ passengers use the service for essential trips, but trip destinations within the service area are not limited or restricted. However, ACT-Connect™ does not provide emergency medical transportation.

## **How Do I Become Certified to Ride ACT-Connect™?**

To determine eligibility ACT-Connect™ uses a self-certification application with a healthcare or licensed professional verification of a disability. Applicants are required to

attend an interview conducted by the ACT staff as part of the eligibility determination process. You may request a ACT-Connect™ application to be mailed to your home address by calling 806-378-3095, or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1. You may pick-up an application in the office at 801 S.E. 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, or you can go to the City of Amarillo's website <http://www.amarillo.gov/> navigate to the Transit Department and click on "What is ACT-Connect™". There you can find a link to

### **What Happens On Interview Day?**

The application must be filled out legibly and completely. The release of information form must be filled out and signed by the passenger. The certification form must be completed by a healthcare or licensed professional that can verify your disability.

Once you have a completed application you may call the office, 806 378-3095, or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1., and setup a time to bring in the application and have an interview. Mailed, E-Mailed or Faxed applications will not be accepted. If you need a ride it can be provided too you free of charge both to and from ACT offices at 801 E 23rd Ave. The interviewer will ask questions to aide in eligibility determination and explain the ACT-Connect™ service to you. You will receive a determination letter within 21 business days.

### **Who Is Eligible to Use ACT-Connect™?**

ACT-Connect™ eligibility is not simply a matter of whether or not a person has a disability. Eligibility is a functional determination of a person's ability to use the Fixed Route system.

If you have a disability which prevents you from using a lift-equipped Fixed Route bus some or all of the time, you may be eligible for ACT-Connect™ service some or all of the time. The ADA regulations provide that a person may be eligible for paratransit services under one of the following three categories:

**Category 1-** Individual cannot independently use accessible fixed route transit due to a disability either some or all of the time.

The first category of eligibility includes those persons who are unable to fully use accessible fixed route bus services. Included in this category is:"Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities." [Section 37.123(e)(1) of the ADA regulations]This applies to an individual, who cannot independently negotiate the fixed route bus system (board, ride or disembark from a bus).

**Category 2-** The fixed route vehicles the passenger needs to use are not accessible and/or the lift cannot be deployed at needed stops.

The second category of eligibility includes:

"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 and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during 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." [Section 37.123(e)(2) of the ADA regulations]

This also applies to any individual who would be able to use the fixed route bus system if an accessible vehicle were available, or for an individual who wants to use a designated station/stop, but the lift cannot be deployed or would be damaged if deployed or temporary conditions render a designated stop unsafe for use by passengers.

**Category 3-** Individual's specific impairment related condition prevents him/her from getting to or from the fixed route transit system.

The third category of ADA paratransit eligibility includes:

"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." [Section 37.123(e)(3) of the ADA regulations].

This applies to an individual who, because of his/her disability, cannot access a bus stop or a rail station to board the fixed route bus system and cannot access his/her final destination after disembarking from a fixed route bus.

### **What is Conditional Eligibility?**

Some people with disabilities may be able to use Fixed Route bus service for some trips or under certain conditions. Eligibility for paratransit for some individuals may be determined on a trip-by-trip basis, for example, if extreme temperatures affect a person's disability (above 100 degrees or below 32 degrees), then that person may be eligible for those paratransit trips only.

### **May I Qualify For Temporary Eligibility?**

A person with a temporary disability may be eligible for ACT-Connect™ service, for a period not to exceed 6 months, if the disability results in his/her functional inability to use the Fixed Route transit system as described in the eligibility categories. To qualify for temporary eligibility, you must complete an application, interview and assessment. Under extenuating circumstances, temporary eligibility can be extended. In order for a temporary certification to become a permanent certification, the person must attend a recertification interview and assessment.

### **Recertification of Eligibility**

All ACT-Connect™ passengers will be required to recertify at reasonable intervals or upon reaching his/her eligibility expiration date. It may also be necessary from time to time or if the condition of the disability changes, for a passenger to recertify their eligibility. Typically, eligibility extends for three (3) years from certification. A customer's ACT-Connect™ Photo Identification Card will indicate his/her eligibility expiration date. It is the responsibility of the customer to recertify their eligibility. Eligibility dates can be found on the Photo Identification Card on the second row from the bottom in the right column. As a courtesy a recertification packet will be mailed to each customer 60 days in advance of their eligibility expiring.

### **What If I Am A Visitor?**

ACT-Connect™ offers service to all visitors who present one of the following documents to prove eligibility:

- Documentation from another transit agency of eligibility, such as a determination letter or ID card.
- A certification by the individual of non-Amarillo residency and a personal statement that they are unable to use fixed route transit when their disability is evident , such as in a wheelchair or use of other mobility device or prosthesis.
- A certification by the individual of non-Amarillo residency and if the disability is not evident (i.e. cardiac or developmental disability), a statement from a medical professional or service agency of a disability.

The law further requires service to a visitor be available for any combination of 21 days during any 365-day period beginning with the visitor's first use of the service during such 365-day period.

Amarillo residents who are eligible for ACT-Connect™ may take advantage of this when traveling to a location that offers fixed route bus service.

### **How Do I Schedule a Trip on ACT-Connect™?**

The passenger must schedule all ACT-Connect™ trips from one (1) to seven (7) calendar days in advance. Trip requests are taken from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday and on Sunday callers may leave a trip request or cancellation on our answering machine, by calling 806-378-3095, or TTY though Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1. Reservations are accepted on Sundays and holidays by use of a recording device. Same day scheduling is not accepted; therefore, calls received after 4:00 p.m. for next day service **will not** be accepted. Changes can be made to previously scheduled rides; however, all changes must be made at least one (1) day in advance of the scheduled trip and will be granted depending on availability. When scheduling your trip, please have the following information ready for the dispatcher before you call:

- Name of certified passenger;
- Originating address – including special directions to locate the address or door location;
- Destination address – including street directions, building and apartment/office number;
- Time you need to arrive at your destination;
- Date of trip;
- Time of return trip;
- Names of guests or personal care attendant who may be riding with you. Please let the dispatcher know if they will be using a mobility device.

All return trips must be scheduled at the same time the original trip is scheduled. **“Will Calls” are not accepted.**

ACT understands that ACT-Connect™ transportation is a very important resource to you and the community. Unfortunately, ACT does not have unlimited resources and must set operational limits when public transportation is provided. In order to ensure you are ready to board the vehicle in a timely manner, all ACT-Connect™ passengers are encouraged to communicate with your doctor's offices or other persons you are meeting with that a **ACT-Connect™ is available until 6:30 pm. If you do not board the vehicle before 6:30 p.m., the ACT-Connect™ vehicle will not wait and you will be required to find alternative transportation to or from your destination.**

**Please remember that all trips are scheduled on a first call first served basis.**

A passenger may request a 2:00 p.m. pick-up, but the time may not be available. The dispatcher may then ask the passenger to negotiate the pick-up time and/or return time up to an hour before or an hour after the requested time.

If a passenger has a scheduled appointment, please notify the dispatcher. The dispatchers will offer a pick-up window based on – how many passengers will be on the vehicle and their destinations. If a passenger insists on a different pick-up window, the passenger may not reach an appointment on time. ACT-Connect™ is a shared ride, consequently passengers may not specify both a pick-up and a drop-off time.

**The dispatcher will not give you a specific time for the bus to arrive. Instead, they will give you the estimated twenty-five (25) minute window of time for your pickup.** For example, if you need to arrive at your destination at 10:00 a.m., the dispatcher may schedule your pick-up time for 9:00 a.m. You will be told that your pick-up window will be 9:00 a.m. to 9:25 a.m. If you have any questions regarding the pick-up window, ask the dispatcher after you schedule your trip.

**Under no circumstances are drivers allowed to make any changes to scheduled times or destinations. These changes would affect the ability of other passengers to meet their scheduled appointments.**

A driver may arrive a few minutes early to pick you up; however, passengers are never required to board the bus prior to the beginning of their scheduled pick up window. Once the beginning of your pick up window begins the **driver will wait five (5) minutes for you to board the bus**. If you do not board the bus within five (5) minutes the bus will depart and you will be charged a no show, which is explained in the No Show Policy on page 7. If you no show at your first pick-up location, ACT will not return to provide you that trip.

If you are ready early for your return trip, you may call the dispatch office and request an early pick up. A dispatcher will look to see if an early pick up time is available; however, if heavy passenger loads prevent an early pick up then the van will arrive during the original scheduled pick up window. If you are not ready when the vehicle arrives to pick you up for your return trip, you will be picked up at the earliest time possible.

**Scheduling Tips:** When you call to schedule trips, have a pen and paper handy so you can write down your twenty-five (25) minute window of time. Make sure you are ready to board the bus when your pick-up window begins.

If you are scheduling several trips, have all of the information for each trip available before you call. This will help the dispatcher to serve you efficiently.

**Please remember, ACT-Connect™ is a shared ride.** This means that other passengers may be dropped-off and picked-up during the course of your trip. **When you board the bus late, the delay you cause may make another passenger late for his/her appointment.**

### **No show/Late Cancellation Policy**

Amarillo City Transit (ACT) will use the following guidelines concerning No shows and Late cancellations:

A no show occurs when a passenger fails to board the bus within five (5) minutes of the arrival time of the bus within the on time window provided when a reservation is made. Customers will not be charged with a no show if the vehicle arrives outside the pick-up time window.

ACT-Connect™ bus operators will wait five (5) minutes from the arrival time for passengers to board the bus.

Passengers who take eight (8) trips or more per month will be subject to the no show policy. If a passenger has eight (8) or more trips in a month and no shows twenty five (25) percent of those trips, then no show penalties will apply. For example, if a passenger books 16 trips in one month and no shows 4 of those trips without a valid reason, then penalties will apply. No show penalties are progressive and are as follows:

Step	Percentage of Monthly trips over 8	Warning or Penalty
1	25%	Warning Letter
2	25%	7 day Suspension
3	25%	14 day Suspension
4	25%	30 Day Suspension

Calculation of penalties will be based upon a rolling 12 month period beginning with the first violation. For example, if the first violation occurs in March then penalties will continue until March of the next year.

Late Cancellations - A trip cancelled less than two (2) hours before the scheduled pickup time will be recorded as a late cancellation. A late cancel is equivalent to one (1) no show. A trip cancelled two (2) hours or more before the scheduled time will be recorded as an advance cancellation, and will not be penalized. You may cancel your trip at anytime day or night by calling 378-3095, or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1 (you may leave a message on our voicemail system before 7:00 am or after 5:00 pm).

No show or late cancellations that are beyond a passenger's control, such as a doctor appointment taking longer than anticipated, will be excused. Any no show caused by ACT errors will be removed from a passengers' record.

All trips scheduled after the no show occurs will not automatically be cancelled. Passengers are required to cancel all trips they do not intend to take.

If a no show occurs, you will be sent a letter containing the date and time of the no show. Each no show must be appealed within ten (10) business days of receipt of the letter.

### **WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY NO SHOWS?**

Reducing no shows on ACT-Connect™ requires actions by riders as well as ACT.

- Confirm the beginning and end of the pickup window and the amount of time the vehicle will wait for you when you call to book your trip.
- Call to cancel, as soon as possible, if you won't be taking a trip.
- Be ready and watching for vehicles during the full on-time pickup window.
- When booking you trips, provide detailed pickup instructions (side or rear door, and so on) for large facilities, for any pickup locations that may be difficult for drivers to find, and for any locations where your needed pickup is not at the main entrance.

- Provide all telephone numbers, including at each destination, and confirm they have been correctly recorded by the dispatcher.
- If you are a subscription rider, call to inform ACT of any changes in your plans, such as a vacation or other absence. Telling a driver is not sufficient.

If you need additional assistance with cancelling your trips, please call ACT dispatch at 806-378-3095 or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1.

### **How Long Does An ACT-Connect™ Trip Take?**

As a shared-ride system, travel time can vary depending on the number of rides booked for the day. Rides are scheduled so that your time on board the vehicle is no more than the length of time that a comparable trip would take if made on the fixed route system. Sometimes extenuating circumstances occur (for example - traffic conditions, road construction, and weather) and Amarillo City Transit has no control. Occasionally when this happens, some trips may exceed the fixed route standard.

### **Does ACT-Connect™ Run in Inclement Weather?**

ACT-Connect™ will run in inclement weather but the buses may be removed from service early if the weather becomes too severe to safely operate. This includes snow, ice, and thunderstorms. If the vans are pulled out of service early, you will need to find alternative transportation to or from your destination. Every effort will be made to communicate with Amarillo's citizens through radio and television announcements if the service is not running. Please note the vans will be running off schedule when the service is operating during inclement weather conditions. You will probably be picked up and dropped off later than your scheduled times.

During periods of severe weather such as heavy snow, ice, or extreme cold, you will not be counted a no show if your trip is not cancelled two (2) hours prior to the pick-up time. However, you MUST cancel the trip prior to the bus arriving for your pick-up or you will receive a no show.

### **What Should I Do If I Need To Cancel My Trip?**

If you need to cancel your scheduled trip, be sure to call 806-378-3095 or TTY though Texas Relay Service at 7-1-1, at least two hours prior to your scheduled trip. Failure to do so will result in you being counted a no show for the trip. Dispatchers are available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for cancellations, and a telephone answering machine is also available twenty-four hours, seven days a week. Please leave the information concerning the trip you wish to cancel on the answering machine. If a passenger requests, a dispatcher will return the call as soon as possible to verify the cancellation.

### **Subscription Service**

Subscription service is available, on a limited basis, for ACT-Connect™ passengers. Eligible passengers must make the same trip at least three (3) times per week, at the same time and with the same origin and destination. Subscription service trips are automatically scheduled. Passengers need to call at least two (2) hours prior to their trip if there is a cancellation.

Passengers who do not use their subscription service for a period of 60 days will lose this service. Should they begin riding again they will have to go to the bottom of the subscription



service waiting list. For more information on subscription service call the Transit office at 806-378-3095, or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1.

### **How Much Does An ACT-Connect™ Trip Cost?**

The fare for each one-way trip is:

Single Ride within ADA service area	\$2.00
Single Ride outside the ADA service area	\$4.00
Guests within the ADA service area	\$2.00
Guests outside the ADA service area	\$4.00
Personal Care Attendant	No Charge
Children age 5 and younger	No Charge
20 Ticket Ride Booklet	\$36.00 (Each ticket will be valued at \$2.00)

All passengers must pay the proper fare each time they board the bus. Please pay only for the ride you are taking. Drivers cannot accept a fare for any other rides and cannot make change. A passenger that does not have his/her fare will not be allowed to complete their trip as scheduled.

For ACT-Connect™ service, a book of twenty (20) tickets can be purchased for \$36.00. Tickets are available at the Amarillo City Transit Office located at 801 E. 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday or between the same hours at the cashiers counter on the first floor at Amarillo City Hall located at 509 S.E. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Tickets are non-refundable. Please have the correct amount of money necessary for the purchase, as the Transit Department does not keep change in the office.

To purchase tickets by mail **DO NOT SEND CASH** - send a check or money order to:

Amarillo City Transit  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo, TX 79105-1971

Upon receipt of the check or money order the tickets will be mailed. Please be sure to include a mailing address if it is different from your street address.

### **If I Make the Same Trip Several Times Per Week, Can I Schedule All of Them With One Call?**

Yes. However, services are provided on a first come, first served basis up to seven (7) days in advance of the trip date.

### **What On Board Policies Should I Be Aware Of?**

**Open Sore and Wound Policy** When using the bus, all persons (passengers and ACT staff members) who have open sores or wounds must ensure that all sores and wounds are properly covered. Any person with open sores and wounds shall be transported unless their condition presents a direct health and/or safety threat to the driver or other persons on the bus.

Passengers are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages, carry open containers of alcohol or smoke while on board.

People who use wheelchairs are typically picked up at locations where there is a ramp. Drivers will not push a wheelchair across any steep, unpaved surface such as grass, dirt, or loose gravel.

Although ACT has established curb-to-curb service as the basic paratransit service mode, measures are taken to make sure passengers get from origin-to-destination, beyond curb-to-curb. If the rider has a disability that requires assistance traveling to or from the curb, the rider may ride with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or request door-to-door service. Drivers are strictly forbidden from entering a passenger's residence or other buildings.

Limit bags to 3 or 4 small grocery size sacks, **if you can carry them and stow the items on your lap**. Carry on items must not block the aisle, or take a seat from another passenger. Do not ask drivers to load, unload, or carry shopping bags.

### **Personal Care Attendants (PCA)**

Passengers who require assistance beyond that provided by the operator may have a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) ride with them at no additional charge. The PCA must board and disembark at the same locations as the certified passenger. The PCA must perform all tasks that are beyond the driver's boundaries but are necessary for the passenger to complete their trip.

**You will need to tell the dispatcher when you schedule trips that you will be traveling with a PCA and if your PCA uses a mobility device. This ensures that there will be room on the vehicle for you, your PCA, and other scheduled riders.**

***Amarillo City Transit does not provide personal care attendants***

### **Guests**

Passengers who wish to take one guest on their trip may do so under the following circumstances:

- (a) The passenger arranges for the guest to ride at the same time the trip is scheduled;
- (b) The guest boards and disembarks at the same locations as the certified passenger;
- (c) The guest pays the appropriate fare as listed; and
- (d) The guest does not take the seat of another ACT-Connect™ certified passenger.

**Additional guests will be accommodated if there is enough space on the vehicle. No unscheduled guests may board the bus.**

All riders in complementary paratransit vehicles are required to use seat belts and/or shoulder harnesses throughout the duration of the trip. Such seat belts and shoulder harnesses shall not be used in lieu of a device which secures a riders wheelchair or mobility aid itself. Wheelchairs must be secured separately with a securement system.

### **Mobility Devices**

Consistent with Department of Transportation regulations, Amarillo City Transit will transport a mobility device with three or more wheels and its user so long as the lift can safely accommodate the size and weight of the wheelchair and its user. If a wheelchair, when occupied, is over the weight that can be safely accommodated by the lift, the driver will give the

user the opportunity to board, using the lift, separately from the wheelchair. ACT is committed to getting passengers safely on the bus.

Passengers are encouraged to maintain their wheelchairs in good working condition. This includes brakes, tires, and handgrips. The wheelchair must be kept clean and free from body fluids. This is for the protection of other passengers and drivers.

For their own safety, passengers using mobility aids that cannot be secured with the vehicle's tie-downs, according to the tie-down manufacture recommendations, may choose to transfer to a passenger seat.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Passengers are required to maintain appropriate and reasonable personal hygiene. This is for the protection of passengers and drivers who come in close contact with one another.

### **Disruptive Behavior – Suspension of Service**

Depending on the violation, passengers who are disruptive, violent or refuse to follow the rules will first receive a warning letter. If the first violation rises to a level of a direct threat to the health and safety of others as determined by any ACT supervisor, the passenger may have their riding privileges revoked. If the first violation is not a direct threat to the health and safety of other passengers, the second incident will result in a thirty (30) day suspension. If the problem persists, a complete revocation of riding privileges may result. ACT-Connect™ is a shared ride. No passenger will be allowed to engage in behaviors that disrupt service. An ACT-Connect™ passenger may appeal a revocation of riding privileges – the Appeals Process is on page 18.

### **Service Animal Policy**

Service animals are welcome on board any Amarillo City Transit bus and in any Amarillo City Transit facility that is open to the public.

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with the disability cannot perform for his or her self. No additional fee or deposit may be charged to transport service animals.

Emotional support dogs are not trained to perform specific tasks for passengers with disabilities. Emotional support dogs are not considered service animals as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Amarillo City Transit is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal. A service animal that displays vicious behavior towards other passengers or otherwise proves a direct threat to the health and safety of others will be excluded from riding the bus. Amarillo City Transit shall not make assumptions about how a particular animal will behave; each situation will be considered individually.

### **What Happens if My Appointment is Running Late?**

Everyone has occasional circumstances outside of their control that can cause delays at a scheduled appointment. If your appointment is running later than you expected and there is a chance you will not be ready for your scheduled return trip (or if you have missed the bus), call

the ACT-Connect™ office as soon as possible. Dispatch will coordinate your request with the drivers. Every effort will be made to adjust your return trip pick-up time and assign another bus to pick you up as early as possible.

**Scheduling Tip:** *Allow extra time for medical appointments or other appointments that may take longer than expected. This will reduce the unnecessary cost of sending an additional vehicle and you having to wait to be worked back into the pickup schedule – after all other previously scheduled trips are honored.*

### **What Should I Do If ACT-Connect™ is Late Picking Me Up?**

Sometimes mechanical difficulties, traffic, or scheduling problems may cause the bus to run late. Please remember, the bus has a twenty-five (25) minute window to pick-up passengers. Please contact our office before making other arrangements for transportation. If you are unable to wait for the bus to arrive and it is necessary for you to leave, please let the dispatchers know. You will not receive a no show if the bus would have picked you up outside of your agreed upon twenty five (25) minute window.

### **Identification Card**

Your identification card, which is provided when you are determined eligible for ACT-Connect™, enables you to use similar services in other cities, for twenty-one (21) days. Call the transit authority in the city you are visiting to make arrangements. You must follow their rules, scheduling procedures, and pay their fares.

### **Accessible Fixed Route**

Amarillo City Transit buses are lift-equipped, and the designated stops are accessible. It may be possible and more convenient for you to ride the Fixed Route bus system for all or part of your trip. Please contact the Transit Department at 806-378-3095, or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1, for more information about Fixed Route transportation service.

### **Fixed Route Travel Training**

ACT-Connect™ passengers may ride a Fixed Route bus for .50 cents each time you board a bus or \$1.00 for a day pass by presenting their ACT-Connect™ photo identification card when boarding any Fixed Route bus.

Panhandle Independent Living Center (PILC) offers complete travel training for interested individuals who want increased freedom to travel around town on the Fixed Routes.

PILC's travel training program begins with a "get acquainted" session. Your first day of training includes a classroom presentation about using fixed routes and learning the various routes.

Once the classroom training is completed, you are ready for the next step – field training. You will be accompanied from your home to the bus stop and board the bus. The travel trainer will ride with you on the bus and accompany you back home. Additional days of field training are provided to ensure you are capable of traveling to a chosen destination.

If you are interested in learning more about the Fixed Route travel training program you may call PILC at 806-374-1400.

## **How Can I Make Suggestions Or Comments About The Service?**

Amarillo City Transit welcomes your suggestions and comments about how ACT-Connect™ can better serve your needs. Please contact Amarillo City Transit at:

Mailing Address: **Amarillo City Transit  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo, TX 79105-1971**

Street Address: **Amarillo City Transit  
801 S.E. 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Amarillo, TX 79103**

Route 33 has a bus stop at the front door of Amarillo City Transit Office's

Business Office Hours: **8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday**

Reservation Hours: **8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Monday through Saturday**

Reservations/Cancellations: **806-378-3095**

Transit Director: Marita Wellage-Reiley **806-378-6842**  
E-Mail: [marita.wellage-reiley@amarillo.gov](mailto:marita.wellage-reiley@amarillo.gov)

Assistant Transit Director: Christopher Quigley **806-378-6902**  
E-Mail: [marita.wellage-reiley@amarillo.gov](mailto:marita.wellage-reiley@amarillo.gov)

Brett Lawler, Transit Operations Supervisor: **806-378-6860**  
E-Mail: [brett.lawler@amarillo.gov](mailto:brett.lawler@amarillo.gov)

TTY (Call through Texas Relay Services) **7-1-1**

This document is available in large print and may be obtained at the Transit office located at 801 S.E. 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave., or by calling 806-378-3095, or TTY though Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1. ACT can provide this document in other languages upon request.

### **Accessibility Statement**

Amarillo City Hall is accessible to individuals with disabilities through its main entry on the south side (SE 7th Avenue) of the building. An access ramp leading to the main entry is located at the southwest corner of the building. Parking spaces for individuals with disabilities are available in the south parking lot. City Hall is equipped with restroom facilities, communications equipment and elevators that are accessible. Individuals with disabilities who require special accommodations for a sign or other language interpreter must make a request with the City

Secretary two business days before the meeting, by telephoning 378-3013, or the City Hall TDD telephone number at 378-4229.

Amarillo City Transit's office is located at 801 S.E. 23rd Avenue and is accessible to all individuals with disabilities, through the main entrance of the building. There is an access ramp located to the left of the main entrance. Parking for individuals with disabilities is available at the main entrance, of the facility. Amarillo City Transit is equipped with accessible restroom facilities. Individuals with disabilities who require special accommodations or a sign language interpreter must contact Amarillo City Transit at 806-378-3095 or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1.

## **Reasonable Modification of Public Transportation Services Policy**

Amarillo City Transit (ACT) operates two distinct public transportation services – a traditional fixed route system and a complementary paratransit service - ACT-Connect™. Both Fixed Route and ACT-Connect™ serve individuals with varying degrees of mobility.

ACT will consider a reasonable modification to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure public transportation is operated in an accessible manner.

It is also important to remember that, “the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights statute, not a transportation or social service program statute. The ADA clearly emphasizes nondiscriminatory access to fixed route service, with complementary paratransit acting as a “safety net” for people who cannot use the fixed route system. Under the ADA, complementary paratransit is not intended to be a comprehensive system of transportation for individuals with disabilities. Another way of saying this is that the ADA does not attempt to meet all the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities. Section 37.123 ADA Paratransit Eligibility – Standards”

The first line of defense for each bus and each passenger is the driver. In many cases – the passengers on ACT's vehicles are Amarillo's most vulnerable citizens. In order to avoid a direct threat to their safety, ACT will first and foremost consider the safety of the passengers in the bus before approving a reasonable modification.

It is ACT policy to work with customers to accommodate needed modifications during the eligibility determination process.

To request a modification to Amarillo City Transit's (ACT) policies and practices, the individual or someone on their behalf must submit a request to ACT. The request must include the following information:

- Who needs the modification – (Name, phone number, address, e-mail address)
- What do you want ACT to do – (Describe the change you want to see take place)
- When is the modification needed – (Is the change needed on a certain day or time)
- Where will the modification take place – (Include the street or intersection or building name)
- Why is the modification needed – (Describe the circumstances that created the request)
- Provide how you would like to receive a response(letter, email or other)and if you need an alternative format.

Requests for a modification to ACT's policies and practices may be denied if the requested modification is unreasonable, meaning:

- Would fundamentally alter the nature of the ACT's services, programs, or activities,
- Granting the request would create a direct threat to the health or safety of others,
- Without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use ACT's services, programs or activities for their intended purpose,
- The request would cause an undue financial and administrative burden.

When ACT denies a reasonable modification request, ACT shall offer, to the maximum extent possible, any other action (that would not result in a fundamental alteration, or direct threat, or an undue financial and administrative burden) that may enable the person to use ACT for its intended purpose.

When a request for a bus stop modification cannot be made and approved of in advance – because of a barrier which the individual with a disability was unaware of until arriving at the bus stop, ACT shall evaluate the request as the barriers are identified. The driver shall ask a supervisor to evaluate the request at the bus stop and when possible, the supervisor will make a determination at that time.

It is not discrimination under the ADA for ACT to refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities if that individual engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

This policy is available on the City of Amarillo's website – [www.amarillo.gov](http://www.amarillo.gov)

Please send your written requests for Reasonable Modifications to:

Amarillo City Transit,  
P.O. Box 1971

Amarillo, Texas 79105

Attention: Transit Director

Or Call 806-378-6842. If you use a TTY machine you can contact the Transit Director through Texas Relay Services at 800-676-3777.

You will be notified in writing of the determination of your reasonable modification request within 20 business days of the receipt of your request.

### **Appeals Process**

You may appeal if you disagree with the decision on a complaint or request for reasonable modification. There are three (3) opportunities to appeal. Appeals should be made in the following order:

1. Amarillo City Transit Director
2. Deputy City Manager
3. Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities

The first appeal must be received by the Transit Director within ten (10) business days. You may submit your appeal as follows:

Transit Director, at 806-378-6842, or TTY through Texas Relay Services at 7-1-1.

Or e-mail your appeal to [Marita.Wellage-Reiley@Amarillo.gov](mailto:Marita.Wellage-Reiley@Amarillo.gov)

You may submit your request in person and visit the administrative offices at 801 SE 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

The Transit Department offices are located on Route 33 with a bus stop at the front door.

Or, you may submit your request by mail to:

The City of Amarillo – Amarillo City Transit  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo, Texas 79105  
Attention: Transit Director

Please notify the Transit Director how you would like to be informed of the decision – a letter, an e-mail, or by phone. If you do not indicate a preferred method, a letter will be mailed to the address in the original correspondence.

At each level of appeal you will receive a response within twenty (20) business days. If the appeal is in your favor, the reasonable modification will be implemented. If the appeal is not in your favor, you will be given instructions on how to proceed with the next level of appeal. The Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities is the final level of appeal and their decision is final.

### **ADA Complaint Procedure**

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against by any member of Amarillo City Transit covered by the ADA, may file a complaint by completing and submitting ACT's ADA complaint form. ACT investigates complaints received no more than 90 business days after the alleged incident. The complaint form and procedure to file a complaint are available on the COA website at [www.amarillo.gov](http://www.amarillo.gov).

The complaint must contain, but not limited to, the following information:

1. Name, address and telephone number of complainant
2. The basis of the complaint (race, color, national origin)
3. The date or dates on with the alleged discriminatory event or events occurred
4. Statement detailing the facts and circumstances of the alleged discrimination
5. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons who may have knowledge of the event
6. Other agencies or courts where a complaint may have been filed with contact name and telephone number
7. Complainant's signature and date

All complaints can be mailed or faxed to the following:

Amarillo City Transit (ACT)  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo Texas 79105  
Attention: Transit Director



(806) 378-6842 (phone)  
(806) 378-6846 (fax)

Once the complaint is received, ACT staff will review the complaint and an acknowledgement letter will be sent out within 72 hours informing him/her of our plan of action. The Transit Department's investigation will include a review of the security camera audio and video and interviews from the complainant and other applicable witnesses — including ACT staff members.

ACT has 14 business days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the complaint, ACT may contact the complainant. The complainant has 30 business days from the date of the letter to send the requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 30 business days, ACT can administratively close the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

After the investigator reviews the complaint, one of two letters will be sent to the complainant: a closure letter or a letter of finding (LOF). A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that after completion of the investigation there was not sufficient information to determine an ADA violation and that the case will be closed. An LOF summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident and explains whether additional training for ACT staff or other action will occur according to the City of Amarillo's progressive disciplinary action guidelines.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, he/she has 30 days after the date of the letter or the LOF to appeal to the Deputy City Manager who will respond to the appeal within 30 business days from receipt of the request.

Submit written appeals to:

City of Amarillo  
Amarillo City Transit (ACT)  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo Texas 79105  
Attn: Deputy City Manager

If the response from the Deputy City Manager is not satisfactory, he/she may then appeal the decision to the final level of appeal – the City Manager. The City Manager will respond to the appeal within 30 business days from receipt of the request.

Submit written appeals to:

City of Amarillo  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo Texas 79105  
Attention: City Manager

Should you have any questions regarding the appeal procedure, please feel free to contact the Transit Director at 806-378-6842 or 806-372-6234, TDD. A person may also file a complaint directly with any of the following agencies: the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590, FTA Region 6 office 819 Taylor Street, Room 14A02 FT. Worth, TX 76102

