



Mountain Express Transit ADA Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Mountain Express Transit of Archuleta County (MET) is committed to the practice of providing programs and services that are equitable, fair and inclusive for all riders. This Plan is intended to guide the MET's efforts to ensure accessibility of all facilities, stops, routes, and vehicles where public services are provided.

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), is a civil rights law prohibiting discrimination against individuals on the basis of disability. Title II of the ADA pertains to the programs, activities, and services public entities provide. Title II of ADA states that, "no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity." (42 USC. Sec. 12132; 28 CFR, Sec. 35.130).

Under title II, the MET must meet the following general requirements:

1. The MET must operate the programs so that the programs are accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities.
2. The MET may not refuse to allow a person with a disability to participate in a service, program, or activity due to the disability.
3. The MET must make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, and procedures that deny equal access to individuals with disabilities unless a fundamental alteration in the program would result.
4. The MET may not provide services or benefits to individuals with disabilities through programs that are separate or different, unless there are measures that are necessary to ensure that benefits and services are equally effective.
5. The MET must take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.
6. The MET must designate at least one responsible employee to coordinate ADA compliance, and provide the Coordinator's name, office address, and telephone number to all interested individuals.
7. The MET must provide notice of ADA requirements. All public entities, regardless of size, must provide information about the rights and protections of Title II to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, employees and other interested persons.
8. The MET must establish a grievance procedure. Public entities must adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

SELF-EVALUATION AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT

The MET is required, under Title II of the ADA and 28 CFR 35.105, to perform a self-evaluation of its buildings, infrastructure, programs, and policies and practices. The buildings and infrastructure examination includes Operations and Maintenance facilities, bus stops, and vehicles. The goal of the evaluation is to verify that the organization is accessible and not adversely affecting the full participation of individuals with disabilities. Barriers identified in this plan will be followed by reasonable recommendations, accommodations, and/or modifications.

Building Facilities Summary

Since the inception of the MET, the transit offices have been located at Nick's Hangar at the County Airport on County Road 600. The offices are located on the second floor of the old building, with no public access and with no elevators. There is no ADA parking spots.

In 2020, the MET was awarded a grant to design and build a multimodal facility that would be located in a central part of Pagosa Springs. The function will be to have a Transit Center, ADA parking and accessibility throughout the facility. The date of completion is expected to be Summer 2022. Any additional or future facilities or improvements will meet the ADA requirements outlined in the Federal Register.

Vehicle Summary

In order to be ADA compliant, the MET shall ensure its fleet of vehicles meet the guidelines for compliance.

As of April, 2021, the MET has a fleet of 4 vehicles. Two of the fixed route vehicles are cutaway buses, one vehicle is used for senior meal delivery, and the third van is used for paratransit services. All four vehicles are equipped with ADA compliant equipment (either a lift or a ramp), and has sufficient clearances to permit a wheelchair or other mobility aid to reach a secure setting.

Other vehicles are equipped and maintained with the following:

1. Priority seating - Each fixed route bus contains a minimum of one sign indicating priority seating for persons with disabilities.
2. Handrails and Stanchions - Each vehicle is equipped with both handrails and stanchions for the purpose of assisting in boarding passengers.
3. Lighting - All MET vehicles are equipped with lighting placed along the stepwell and doorways.

The MET will research the addition of mobility aids for passengers to request the vehicle to stop. Currently, passengers and drivers vocally announce the next stop. By adding the accessible controls, both provide the driver with an auditory and visual cue that a request has been made. Additionally, the MET will research the addition of illumination signs indicating the route number and/or next destination of the vehicle.

Bus Stop Summary

The MET is looking for opportunities to improve bus stops, as well as access to bus stops. The MET is in the process of identifying specific bus stops as priority areas for accessibility and shelter improvement projects.

PARATRANSIT SERVICES

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires that public entities that operate non-commute fixed route transportation services also provide paratransit services for individuals whose disabilities make them unable to use the fixed route system. In addition, public entities subject to the ADA regulations must develop and administer a process for determining if individuals who request services meet the regulatory requirements for eligibility.

Basically, the ADA requires that Paratransit service must be “comparable” to the fixed route services in terms of service levels and availability. There are six (6) service criteria that are used to evaluate ADA Paratransit service comparability to the fixed route:

1. Availability in the same area served by the fixed route. Specifically, service must be made available to all origins and destinations within a width of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on each side of a fixed route. This includes an area within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile radius at the end of each fixed route as well.
2. Available to any ADA Paratransit eligible persons at any requested time on any particular day in response to a request for service made the previous day.
3. ADA Paratransit fares that are no more than twice the fare that would be charged to an individual paying full fare to a trip of similar length, at a similar time of day on the fixed route system.
4. There can be no trip restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose.
5. Service must be made available to eligible persons on a next day basis.
6. There can be no constraints on the amount of service that is provided to any eligible person. Specifically, there can be no operating practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA Paratransit eligible individuals.

The Met will provide services to origins and destinations within the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile limit of the fixed bus route. Any services outside of this area will be to the discretion of the dispatcher and coordinator.

Next-day service is provided on the Paratransit, so long as the reservation was made prior to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Reservations are taken five days a week for next day service and on Fridays for Monday service.