

# Services for our Customers with Disabilities

At the Shenango Valley Shuttle Service (SVSS), our primary goal is to ensure that every customer enjoys a safe and comfortable ride. If you want to use SVSS transportation services and have a disability, you have choices.

If you can ride on one of our standard, fixed route buses, SVSS vehicles and operators are equipped to serve customers who use mobility devices. The fare to ride a standard fixed route vehicle is \$.60 (or \$1.20 round trip). There are more details about fixed route assistance for our customers with disabilities below.

If you have a disability and are unable to use our fixed route service, SVSS also provides van service with door-to-door (origin to destination) pick-up and drop-off. This service is commonly referred to as paratransit service. The fare to use our paratransit service is \$2.00(or \$4.00 round trip). Eligibility and paratransit service details are listed further down this page.

Schedules and other information will be made available in accessible formats including large format, audio recording, electronic file, and braille. Please contact us by phone (724) 981-1561 (Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m to 4:30 pm) or by [email](#) to let us know how we can assist you.

## Fixed Route Assistance for Customers with Disabilities

SVSS will make every effort to ensure that customers enjoy a comfortable, safe, and pleasant ride on our buses. SVSS bus operators will always strive to be professional and courteous with all customers.

You can ride the fixed route buses for only \$.60 a trip as opposed to the paratransit service which costs \$2.00 .

SVSS offers the following assistance on our fixed route buses for our customers with mobility limitations.

SVSS will transport all wheelchairs regardless of size or weight as long as the lift and the vehicle can physically accommodate them. SVSS will transport customers who use respirators, concentrators, or portable oxygen.

SVSS will permit guide dogs or other service animals to accompany a customer on their bus or van ride.

Our buses are equipped with a kneeling feature for easier access. All you have to do is ask the driver to deploy the kneeler at any stop.

Our buses are equipped with lifts or ramps. All you have to do is ask the driver to deploy the lift or ramp at any stop. The driver can assist you in boarding or leaving the bus.

- Our buses are equipped to automatically announce major bus stops on interior LED signs for people with hearing disabilities and audio announcements for people with vision disabilities.
- In addition, an exterior speaker beside the front door will automatically announce the route for that bus at stops served by multiple bus routes.
- Our bus operators will request that customers sitting in priority seating or in a flip-up seat over the securement area vacate these seats when a person with a disability needs to use them.
- Our bus operators will allow time for persons with disabilities to board/disembark a vehicle and can assist customers in doing so.

SVSS will make every effort to accommodate any and all mobility aids in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any questions or complaints, please let us know immediately. The SVSS is available at 724-981-1561 Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

## Deviated Fixed Route Service

Any customer can ask the driver to deviate the bus from its regular route to get them closer to their destination. Customers can request route deviations in advance by calling SVSS at 724-981-1561 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## ADA Paratransit Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law. The intent of the ADA is to remove barriers that have prevented people with disabilities from fully participating in life. Under the ADA, fixed route service on regular city buses (see above) is to be the primary means of public transportation for everyone, including people with disabilities.

However, SVSS also provides door-to-door van service (origin to destination) for people who are unable to ride the fixed route buses. The service operates within the same service area as the SVSS standard bus service. The fare to use our paratransit service is \$2.00 each way or \$4.00 round trip.

Customers must register and be certified to ride this van service.

SVSS provides ADA Complementary Paratransit services to out-of-town visitors. SVSS requests documentation from visitor's local/home paratransit system. If no such documentation is available, SVSS would accept a visitor's proof of residence and disability (if not apparent). Once documentation is secured, SVSS provides requisite transportation services.

Eligible customers may make next day reservations from 6:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For complete information on SVSS van service and to get a van service application, please call SVSS at 724-981-1561 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### **ADA Paratransit Service**

Mercer County Community Transit (MCCT) provides ADA Paratransit service for the SVSS. ADA paratransit operates Monday through Friday 7:00am to 6:00PM and Saturday 8:00-4:30. ADA paratransit operates in the same service area as the fixed route, which is: Hermitage, Sharon, Farrell, Sharpsville and Wheatland.

Passenger are allowed to use (1) PCA, at no charge, to assist with personal needs. The Americans with Disabilities Act also allows disabled passengers to travel with a companion or companions if space allows.

### **Reasonable Modification/Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities**

SVSS recognizes each disability can be unique to an individual. SVSS gladly work with passengers who request reasonable service modifications when such accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability.

Requests for accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be denied if:

*Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the Transit's service, programs, or activities;*

*Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of others;*

*Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use the SVSS's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.*

### **Process for Requesting Modifications/Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities**

Requests for modifications of the Transit's policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate an individual with a disability may be made either in advance or at the time of the transportation service. The SVSS is best able to address and accommodate a request when it is made in advance. The process for making a request is as follows:

#### **Advance Requests:**

*When making a request, please thoroughly describe what is needed in order to use the service, and why this accommodation is necessary.*

*SVSS staff will review the request, and make every effort to communicate in advance whether or not the requested modification can be made.*

*If the modification is not made, the SVSS will provide the reason for the denial of the request. Requests may be denied on one or more of the following grounds:*

*Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the Transit's service, programs, or activities;*

*Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of others;*

*Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use the SVSS's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.*

*Requests may be made through the following means: Customers should contact the Director of Transit Operations at:*

*Phone: 724-981-6222*

*Email: [mnashtock@mrcog.com](mailto:mnashtock@mrcog.com)*

*Mail: 2495 Highland Road, Hermitage, PA 16148, Attn: Director of Transit Operations*

**Same Day Requests:**

*When a request for modification cannot be made in advance, a request may be made on the same day, or during service.*

*The request should be made to the operator of the SVSS vehicle.*

*Please describe in detail the accommodation needed, and why it is necessary in order to use the service.*

*Operators may grant a request if it is reasonable and meets the requirements of the Transit's policy.*

*If an operator is unsure if the request should be granted or declined, she/he is required to consult with the dispatch office to receive direction. Requests may be denied on the following grounds:*

*Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the Transit's service, programs, or activities;*

*Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of others;*

*Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use the Transit's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.*

*A vehicle operator's availability to provide an accommodation may be quite limited when he/she is providing service, and if the request would require extended consideration and attention, the request may not be accommodated immediately, in which case the passenger will be encouraged to submit a written request for consideration on future trips.*

*The SVSS's ability to accommodate the requested modifications may vary by route, day of travel, time of day, or other circumstances.*

**Appeal Process:** If a passenger wishes to appeal SVSS's denial of a request for accommodations, contact information is as follows:

*Customers should contact the Director of Transit Operations at:*

*Phone: 724-981-6222*

*Email: [mnashtock@mrcog.com](mailto:mnashtock@mrcog.com)*

*Mail: 2495 Highland Road, Hermitage, PA 16148, Attn: Director of Transit Operations*

[ADA Complementary Paratransit Information](#)