



Thank you for inquiring about eligibility for Omnitrans ADA Paratransit Service. Access is for individuals with a disability or a disabling health condition that prevents them from independently using the fully accessible Omnitrans regular fixed route bus system either all of the time, temporarily, or under certain circumstances. Enclosed are the Omnitrans ADA Paratransit Application and information on completing the Access Eligibility process. If you need an alternative format of this application or additional information please contact (909) 379-7284 or [OmniADA@omnitrans.org](mailto:OmniADA@omnitrans.org).

### **STEPS IN THE ELIGIBILITY PROCESS:**

1. Complete the Paratransit Application that follows this page. If you need help filling out the application, we can assist you.
2. Have a qualified healthcare professional who is familiar with your disability and functional abilities complete the attached Professional Verification.
3. Once all the paperwork is complete, call the Eligibility staff at (909) 379-7284 to set up an appointment for an in-person eligibility review and functional transit assessment. Please **DO NOT MAIL OR FAX THE APPLICATION** – you will bring the complete, original with you to your appointment.
4. Complete the in-person review and orientation with a functional assessment as deemed necessary at the Eligibility and Mobility facility. Directions to the facility and information about the Eligibility review are provided in this packet. Transportation to and returning from the Eligibility are provided at no charge from locations within the Omnitrans ADA service area.
5. An eligibility determination will be made in writing within 21 days from the date your application is complete which includes an in-person interview, a functional assessment, and review of any additional information. If a determination is not made in writing within 21 days after the completion of the application and in-person process, you are eligible for Access transportation until the time that a determination regarding your eligibility is made.

### **ABOUT ACCESS:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a civil rights bill which bans discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Under the ADA, transit agencies operating a fixed route public bus system must provide a comparable paratransit system for individuals with disabilities who cannot use the fixed route bus system. This means that an individual whose disability prevents them from independently using the regular public bus system should be able to travel on the same days, during the same hours, and in the same general area as the bus travels, for a fare which is not to exceed twice the non-discounted regular bus fare of an adult passenger. Omnitrans Access Service is designed to meet these requirements.

Omnitrans' Access paratransit service is a pre-reservation, shared-ride, public transportation service. The mode of Access is designed to be a curb-to-curb service however; passengers requiring a higher level of assistance from their origin to their destination due to an impairment related condition will need to contact Omnitrans to identify a reasonable accommodation that can be provided to assist their transportation. The Access service area is defined as up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile on either side of an existing regular Omnitrans bus route.

In order to use the Omnitrans Access ADA paratransit service, you must be certified as eligible. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. ADA regulations strictly limit eligibility to only those who have specific limitations which prevent them from using accessible public transportation bus systems. The entire Omnitrans public bus fleet is fully accessible.

Three key factors to eligibility are:

1. The individual's ability to independently travel to/from the nearest bus stop.
2. The individual's ability to independently board/exit the bus.
3. The individual's cognitive ability to independently navigate the regular bus system.

Issues which by themselves are not factors used to determine eligibility include:

1. Age
2. Distance to bus stop
3. Lack of bus service to an area
4. Overcrowded buses
5. Inability to speak English
6. Weather conditions

Your ADA application may be approved for full eligibility (Unconditional), on a limited basis for specific conditions (Conditional), or for a temporary period (Temporary). If you are determined to have the ability of using the regular bus system for all trips, without the assistance of another person, you will not be eligible for Access Service.

If you are determined to be Not Eligible for ADA paratransit service, or are dissatisfied with your eligibility type, you may appeal the decision by submitting a written request to Omnitrans within 60 days after the receipt of your denial/approval letter. You may request a Level One appeal or a Level Two appeal. A Level One appeal is handled by an Appeal Specialist who reviews the documentation and any new information that you provide and feel relevant to your determination. The Appeal Specialist is independent of the Eligibility Department.

A Level Two appeal is a format where you appear before an Appeal Review Panel to present information that you feel should be taken into consideration for your eligibility. The panel will review the eligibility documentation and hear information that you present to the panel. The decision of the Level Two Panel is the FINAL determination. Specific information regarding an appeal is included with the denial letter.

The appeal process should take no longer than 30 days. You may re-submit an application if your condition worsens.

It is important that all parts of the application are completed including the healthcare professional form. You will not be able to schedule your appointment if these required forms are not complete. If you arrive for your in-person appointment with incomplete forms your appointment may be cancelled.

What do I bring to the Eligibility Review?

- A photo ID.
- Your current medication list.
- The completed application AND healthcare professional verification. **DO NOT MAIL OR FAX THE APPLICATION.**
- All the mobility aids that you use for travel outside of your home.
- If you have vision impairment, please bring a VISUAL ACUITY STATEMENT from your doctor.
- If you do not bring your healthcare professional verification form your eligibility application is not complete and your process will be delayed. All information provided is protected and will remain confidential.
- Do not forget to sign the AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION at the bottom of page 3.
- This is for you to sign, DO NOT have your healthcare professional sign the form.
- When traveling to the assessment facility, you may want to bring a snack, book, medications, enough oxy-

gen, etc as the review may take up to two hours plus your travel time.

What will happen at the Eligibility Review?

- An Eligibility Technician will sit down with you to review your application and ask you additional questions regarding your ability to use the bus system.
- You may be required to participate in a functional assessment in the community so we can further evaluate your functional abilities. Your assessment may be conducted outside, so please come dressed in appropriate attire for the weather that day, including shoes and/or a hat. For safety purposes, Access Service does not recommend children on the functional assessment course.
- We will take your photograph which will be used for your identification card if you are determined eligible for Access Service.
- You may bring someone of your choosing with you to the Eligibility Review. If you are traveling with children, please bring someone to supervise them while you are participating in the review.