

BMT ZIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

(Riders Guide)

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WELCOME TO BMT ZIP PARATRANSIT SERVICE

Beaumont Zip Paratransit Services provides shared, curb-to-curb with-door assistance, providing public transportation to people with disabilities who cannot use BMT ZIP's fixed route buses. "Curb-to-curb" means the vehicle will pick up customers at the curb of the pick-up address and drop-off customers at the curb of the drop-off address. Customers needing assistance beyond the curb can let a BMT ZIP employee know so additional aid can be provided. In addition, BMT ZIP provides an "Assist-to-Door" service for customers who cannot independently walk or roll from the front door of their home to a BMT ZIP van parked curbside. Paratransit Services is a shared-ride service operated with modern, accessible vehicles. Riders unable to access vans by using steps may use wheelchair lifts. We hope this guide answers all your questions. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to provide safe, dependable, and efficient public transportation for persons with disabilities. So again, welcome to BMT ZIP Paratransit Services!

OVERVIEW

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires that each public agency, which operates a fixed route public transit service, provide paratransit service for persons with disabilities who cannot utilize fixed route service due to their disability. Three categories of persons with rights to paratransit services established by the ADA are:

Category 1) Individuals who, because of their disability, cannot independently board, ride and disembark from an accessible vehicle.

Category 2) Any person with a disability who can use an accessible fixed-route vehicle but for whom any desired trip cannot be made because the service they need is not yet accessible is eligible.

Category 3) Those with impairment-related conditions prevent them from getting to or from a boarding or disembarking location.

Paratransit must provide a level of service comparable to that offered on the fixed route system. ADA defines comparable paratransit service with six criteria:

1. Paratransit must operate in the same service area as the fixed route system.
2. Paratransit must have a comparable response time.
3. Paratransit fares can be at most twice that of fixed route service for the same trip.
4. Paratransit must have comparable days and hours of service compared to the fixed route service for the same trip.
5. Paratransit must meet requests for any trip purpose.
6. Paratransit must keep service availability open because of capacity constraints.

ADMINISTRATOR

The Transit Management of Beaumont, located at 550 Milam St., Beaumont, Texas, ensures overall ADA compliance. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The BMT ZIP General Manager is responsible for directing the day-to-day activities of MT Zip's demand response Program. The Operations Manager is responsible for the overall daily bus operations.

PURPOSE

The Transit Management of Beaumont offers demand response transportation services for persons with disabilities. This program continues to meet many transit passengers' ever-growing and changing transportation demands. BMT ZIP aims to provide excellent public transit services for citizens in the safest, most cost-efficient, effective, and most friendly manner possible.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICE

Per ADA guidelines, paratransit service may be provided to persons with a physical, mental, or visual impairment of such severity as to prevent independent city bus travel without considering that it may be difficult, challenging, uncomfortable, or inconvenient to do so. Therefore, a disability, diagnosis, or condition alone does not determine automatic paratransit eligibility. Instead, paratransit eligibility is determined by whether the applicant's functional mobility is so severely restricted that the applicant is prevented from performing the mobility skills necessary for independent city bus travel, even though it may be difficult, inconvenient, or challenging to do so.

The BMT ZIP application, information, and any supplemental documentation are reviewed by a BMT ZIP Specialist who will determine the applicant's eligibility for paratransit service. The customer is notified by mail of their eligibility status within twenty-one days of the completed record.

BMT ZIP applications may be obtained from the BMT ZIP Office at 550 Milam St., Beaumont, Texas 77701. The contact number for the BMT ZIP office is (409-835-7895) < press option one> between 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, or visit www.beaumonttransit.com.

RECERTIFICATION

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, all paratransit customers must recertify their paratransit eligibility at regular intervals.

Transit Management of Beaumont resolved that the recertification period for BMT ZIP customers occurs at least once every *five (5) years*. Recertification attempts to ensure that BMT ZIP has the most current information regarding the customer's contact information and any significant changes in health status and personal travel needs. Therefore, it is essential to contact the BMT ZIP office when you have a change of address or telephone number. Recertification applications are mailed to the passenger's address on file. Although BMT ZIP is not responsible for contacting passengers if the post office returns applications, if there is or may be any hindrance in providing BMT ZIP with the requested recertification application, please call the BMT ZIP office at your earliest convenience. An extension of fifteen (15) days can be requested by contacting our offices at 409-835-7895. Service will not be discontinued

for approved extension of the re-certification process. Service will not be interrupted until the second extension is exhausted (60 days). Please be advised that a \$5.00 fee covers the Application and the ID Card*. The fee must be paid in cash, check, or money order at our Office; if mailing the application, please include your payment money order/check (do not mail cash). Customers will receive written notification of recertification approximately twenty-one (21) days before the date their BMT ZIP service is due to expire. But may be subject to recertification at any time.

BMT ZIP has the right to review any customer's eligibility status at any time there is an indication of or reason to expect a change in the customer's medical condition, functional level, or mobility status. In such cases, BMT ZIP may require that additional or corroborating information be submitted by or on behalf of the customer.

Each customer is responsible for informing BMT ZIP of any change that may affect their eligibility status, including significant improvement or deterioration of mobility skills, the presence of a communicable or contagious disease, and assistive devices or mobility aids. Customers must also promptly inform BMT ZIP of any changes to their residential address; contact telephone numbers; the name, address, or phone number of their designated emergency contact person(s), and, if applicable, of persons assigned to act on a customer's behalf.

Recertification applications must be received thirty (30) days after the request for recertification. In addition, recertification applications must be received no later than thirty (30) days after the customer's service expiration date, which appears on the BMT ZIP identification card. Customers whose applications are not received any later than thirty (30) days after the expiration date may risk service interruption. Recertification applications may be obtained and returned at the BMT ZIP Office at 550 Milam St. Beaumont, Texas (409-835-7895) Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. or visit www.beaumonttransit.com.

BMT IDENTIFICATION CARD

Customers certified to use BMT ZIP must have another form of identification card. New customers must obtain an ID card before trip reservations can be made. Instructions to get an ID card are provided in the initial eligibility notice. BMT ZIP photo ID cards can only be made at the BMT ZIP location, 550 Milam St., Beaumont, Texas 77701. The initial photo identification card is included with the application fee of \$5.00. Replacement or recertification cards are also 5.00 due to the reprocessing of application and ID cards.

APPLICATION FOR SERVICES

A service application must be completed and approved by Transit Management of Beaumont before the BMT ZIP Paratransit Services is delivered. An application for service may be requested by calling the BMT ZIP Office between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday or by coming to our offices at:

***BMT ZIP Operations Facility, 550 Milam St. Beaumont, Texas 77701
(409-835-7895)***

Upon receipt of a request for an application over the phone, one application will be mailed to the requestor within seven (7) working days. We also have a walk-in option for individuals to request an application. The applicant and physician must complete the application form and return it to the BMT ZIP office in person. If the application is not returned completed in the desired request by BMT ZIP, the application will be voided.

An application cannot be approved until the Verification of Disability is completed by a physician or other professional and returned to BMT ZIP.

Once the application is complete, eligibility will be determined within twenty-one (21) calendar days. Also, an applicant will be allowed to use the service once a decision is made if the application process exceeds twenty-one (21) calendar days.

Within 21 days, the following information will be mailed, emailed, and or a phone call will be placed to the applicant:

1. Approval or rejection of application (and reason, if rejected).
 - a) Non-eligibility as defined by ADA eligibility categories.
 - b) Effective dates of eligibility.
 - c) Explanation of restrictions, such as temporary certification or trip-by-trip eligibility determination.

Appeals Process

If an applicant wishes to appeal an appeal based on a decision by the BMT ZIP facility or to express a complaint about the ZIP Program, the following steps may be taken:

- A. A written request to appeal will be issued to the BMT ZIP Facility by the appellant within sixty (60) days of the date of the denial notice.*
- B. The appellant will be notified by mail of the date and time of the meeting. The appellant submitting a request to appeal has the right to be heard and to present information and arguments, including the separation of functions. Appellants may bring a representative with them to this meeting. [49 CFR Part 37. 125(g)(20).]*
- C. BMT ZIP will respond to an appeal by the appellant by written letter within thirty (30) days of the appeal and hearing explaining the determination of the decision given.*
- D. If a decision is not made within thirty (30) days of the appeal hearing, the paratransit service will be provided to the appellant until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.*

This appeal process does not apply to policy or other matters with the City Council. The ZIP Coordinator or Transit General Manager may be written at Beaumont Municipal Transit, 550 Milam Street, Beaumont, Texas 77701. The Director of Community Development and Planning may be written at City of Beaumont, Community Development and Planning Department, P.O. Box 3827, Beaumont, Texas 77704.

BMT ZIP Paratransit Service Hours

BMT ZIP Paratransit Services operations	Monday-Friday: 6:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
BMT ZIP Paratransit Scheduling hours	Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
BMT ZIP Paratransit Administration office hours	Monday-Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

SERVICE AREA

BMT ZIP Paratransit Services is only operated within the city limits of Beaumont, Texas. Therefore, origins and destinations must fall within The City of Beaumont.

SCHEDULING PARATRANSIT SERVICES

To schedule a trip, please call (409) 835-7895 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday thru Friday. Reservations may be made one day before desired trip service. Transportation for eligible disabled persons will be provided on a “first-come-first-served” basis regardless of trip purpose. When scheduling a trip, please be ready to provide the following info:

- Your name.
- Your pick-up address (including building/business names, specific pick-up information, and landmarks).
- The date you are traveling.
- The time you would like to be picked up. (Note: schedule appointments with ample time to reach your destination)
- Requested drop-off time and alternate drop-off times.
- The street address of your destination (including specific drop-off information).
- If a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) will travel with you.
- If a guest other than your PCA will travel with you (including children).
- Schedule a return trip
- need for a will-call (for a medical appointment)

REMEMBER: The BMT ZIP is a ride-share paratransit service for use by all those who are participating. Mutual consideration and respect for your fellow riders will avoid unnecessary delays and assure greater efficiency. *The BMT ZIP does not provide emergency service, nor is it an ambulance service.*

To ensure your trip is scheduled in a manner that best suits the most agreeable time, please let us know if any of the following applies:

Suppose you cannot arrive at your destination before a specific time (i.e., your PCA is at home at a particular time to receive you). If so, you will receive a pick-up window that will get you to your destination by your requested time. Please allow flexibility on your pick-up time.

Suppose you must arrive at your destination no later than a specific time (i.e., a doctor's appointment, dialysis, or work). If so, you will be given a pick-up window that will allow you to get there in time. Please allow flexibility on your pick-up time.

Suppose you cannot be picked up before a specific time (i.e., you don't get off work until a particular time). Then, you will receive a pickup window that starts after your requested time.

Suppose you would like to be picked up at a specific time regardless of when you arrive at your destination (i.e., going shopping, to the gym, etc.). We will accommodate a time as close to your requested time as possible. Your arrival time may vary depending on the length of the trip and other passengers onboard.

PROVIDE FOR ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL TIMES

Paratransit Services may offer travel times (1) one hour before or (1) one hour after the requested travel time as established under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 service criteria.

TIPS FOR SCHEDULING SERVICE

When scheduling rides for specific times, allow plenty of time to finish your appointment to meet the vehicle at your scheduled pick-up time. Be aware of opening and closing times at your destination to avoid waiting outside the building before or after business hours. When scheduling your trips, please follow these suggestions:

- Allow adequate time to reach your destination.
- Allow extra time for the pick-up and drop-off of other passengers before reaching your destination. (Keep in mind; this is a ride-share service)
- Allow for traffic conditions and weather delays.

CONFIRMING YOUR TRIPS

Trips will be confirmed at the time a trip reservation is scheduled. The **reservation agent will repeat the trip's date, address, and other details.** In addition, the BMT ZIP telephone system will call customers the evening before travel, reminding them of their next day's trips. If a rider needs to cancel the trip or make a different reservation, call the BMT ZIP office at (409-835-7895).

CANCELING TRIPS

Trips must be canceled at least one (1) hour before the start of your ready-time window. Please see page 14 for a definition of the ready-time window.

CHANGING OR CANCELING A RESERVATION

Please call between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM if you want to change a reservation. Changes must be requested at least one (1) hour in advance. Then, call BMT ZIP at 409-835-7895 to revise or cancel a trip.

“WILL CALL” TRIPS

Occasionally, customers need open-ended return times because they are still determining when they will be ready to be picked up. For example, customers may request open-ended pick-up times for medical appointments or jury duty only. Customers must let reservation agents know when reservations are made that they want a “will-call.” Will-call pickups are activated when the customer notifies the BMT ZIP reservation employee that they are ready to be picked up. BMT ZIP will dispatch a vehicle as soon as possible; however, under certain peak times and high-use circumstances, it can take up to one (1) hour before the vehicle arrives at the pick-up location. Therefore, will-call pick-ups are not recommended unless all other options have been eliminated. Operators will then wait five (5) minutes for will call riders before continuing their route.

On-time Performance

1. *There will be no restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose. [49 CFR 37.13(d)]*
2. *There will be no limitations on service based on capacity constraints. [49 CFR 37.131(f)] Capacity constraints include:*
 - a. *There will be no restrictions on the number of trips an individual can take. [49 CFR 37.131(£) (1)]*
 - b. *There will be no waiting lists for access to service. [49 CFR 37.131(£) (2)]*
 - c. *BMT ZIP will avoid any operational pattern or practice that significantly limits service availability, such as a substantial number of significantly untimely pickups for initial or return trips, a substantial number of trip denials or missed trips, or significant numbers of trips with excessive trip lengths. [49 CFR 37.13(f)(i)(A)-(C)]*
 - d. *Operational problems attributable to causes beyond BMT ZIP control (such as severe weather or unsafe traffic conditions) shall not be a basis for determining that the kind of pattern or practice mentioned in c. immediately above exists. [49 CFR 37.131 (f) (ii)]*

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

BMT ZIP does not operate fixed route bus service or Paratransit service on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day	MLK Birthday
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving	Friday After Thanksgiving
Fourth of July	Christmas	Juneteenth

Good Friday

President's Day

OPERATOR TRAINING

All BMT ZIP vehicles and operators will be trained in at least the following:

- All operators will complete the BMT ZIP New Hire Orientation, which includes FTA Training, Smith Systems, and other accumulated training necessary for the successful performance of safety-sensitive personnel.
- Loading and unloading of passengers using mobility assistance devices
- Passenger assistance training, including passenger courtesy and sensitivity Training.

Operators will be required to perform the following functions:

- Driving to the curb of the pick-up location
- Assisting in boarding and exiting
- Driving to the curb of the destination points
- Moving wheelchairs to and from the vehicle or helping passengers to the vehicle by accommodating assist-to-door service.

Operators will be prohibited from:

- Giving medication
- Using oxygen or other life-assistance machines
- Feeding or dressing passengers
- Handling complaints
- Making reservations
- Carrying or handling excessive packages or baggage unless the operator can accommodate.

RIDING PARATRANSIT SERVICES

PICK-UP/DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

Paratransit Services has established pick-up and drop-off locations for the rider's convenience to ensure that a rider's trip goes smoothly.

WHERE TO WAIT

Paratransit Services is an origin-to-destination ride-share program that complements BMT ZIP fixed route bus services. Riders must be waiting at the sidewalk, curb, or at another safe waiting area in front of, or as close as possible to, the entrance of the pick-up location.

Operators will wait for a rider at the curb of a public street, in front of, or as close as possible to, the rider's house, building, or other designated pick-up location. **The operator cannot**

enter any home, office, or facility. A companion or personal care attendant must be available if a rider needs assistance exiting the pick-up location. For drop-offs, the operator will drop the rider off at their door if the area is on the first floor. Operators are not required to use assist-to-door service that requires a service to surpass the first floor. Drop-offs will also include the sidewalk or another safe waiting area next to the curb or a public street in front of, or as close as possible to, the designated drop-off location.

APARTMENT/OFFICE COMPLEXES

Please provide Paratransit schedulers with specific building names and numbers within the complex when scheduling your trip. Operators will pick up the rider at that particular building. If a rider's facility is located within a gated community and requires separate entry, notify the security office to arrange access for the Paratransit vehicle before pick-up time. If the rider does not arrange entry, and the vehicle cannot enter the pick-up area, the rider will be considered a No-Show.

NURSING HOMES

Riders with pick-ups at nursing homes should meet the operator in front of the curb, at another safe waiting area in front, or as close as possible to the entrance or loading area. **Operators cannot assist riders in and out of a nursing home; staff should be ready to help the individual out of the nursing home if necessary.** Riders will unload at the curb/sidewalk in front of any major and the safest possible entrance or loading area of the nursing home.

ADULT PROGRAM/ DAYCARE CENTERS

Riders attending adult programs or daycare centers should be present when paratransit service vehicles arrive. **Operators cannot assist riders in or out of adult program/daycare centers. The Center's staff must be ready to help the individual in or out of the center if necessary.**

If the Adult/Day Care Center requires unique entry, the rider or center staff should arrange entry for the paratransit vehicle before pick-up time. However, suppose the rider or center staff needs to set access, and the vehicle cannot enter the pick-up area. In that case, the rider will be considered a No-Show; therefore, the Adult Program/Day Care will resume responsibility for returning the rider to their home.

Paratransit Services has designated standard pick-up and drop-off sites at important centers and destinations such as large medical centers and malls. If a rider schedules a trip to one of these destinations, the scheduler will inform the rider of the specific pickup and drop-off location.

BOARDING MOBILITY DEVICES

Paratransit Services will make every attempt to accommodate standard mobility devices.

For our riders' safety, mobility devices are preferred to be clean, safe, and in good working condition when traveling. BMT ZIP requires that a licensed physician list your mobility aid devices. By providing in detail the manufacturer, model, and serial number.

Use of Wheelchair Lifts, Ramps, and Securement Devices

- a. BMT ZIP will transport any wheelchair on its vehicles so long as 1) The dimensional requirements do not create or pose a safety concern to the vehicle or its passengers, and
2) The weight does not exceed the manufacturer's recommended vehicle or lift design load specifications when occupied. For example, [49 CFR 37 & 38] BMT ZIP Lift is rated for 600 lbs. That is for a combined weight of the mobility device and rider that equals 600 pounds.
- b. Wheelchairs must be placed in the vehicle's designated area where they can be secured. Wheelchairs will not be permitted to ride in any other location. [49 CFR 37.165 (b) & (c) (3)]
- c. If a wheelchair cannot be secured or restrained, the patron may still ride on the vehicle but must remain in the designated area. [49 CFR 37.165(d)]
- d. In some circumstances, BMT ZIP will ask a passenger using a wheelchair to transfer to a vehicle seat, although the passenger will not be required to move. [49 CFR 37.165 (e)]
- e. BMT ZIP will allow any patron who requests to board using a wheelchair lift or ramp to do so even if they do not use a wheelchair. [49 CFR 37.165(g)] However, lifts and ramps will not be deployed at stops where they will be damaged if deployed or there is some temporary danger that prevents the safe use of that stop. [49 CFR 37.167(g)]
- f. Where necessary or upon request, BMT ZIP personnel will assist individuals with disabilities using securement devices, ramps, and lifts. [49 37.165(f)]
- g. 38.23(d) of the DOT ADA regulations require all ADA-compliant buses and vans to have a two-part securement system, one to secure the wheelchair and a seat belt and shoulder harness for the wheelchair user. In addition, section 38.23(a) requires vehicles over 22 feet in length to have enough securement locations and devices to secure two wheelchairs. In comparison, vehicles 22 feet and under must be able to accommodate at least one wheelchair. Beaumont Zip Para Transit Fleet is under 22 Feet in length.

Maintenance of Wheelchair Lifts, Ramps, and Securement Devices

1. BMT ZIP has a system of regular and frequent maintenance checks of its wheelchair lifts and ramps to ensure operability. [49 CFR 37.163(b)]

2. Operators are required to notify supervisors immediately if a lift is inoperable for any reason so that maintenance can be applied. [49 CFR 37.163(c)]

3. If a lift or ramp becomes inoperable during service, the vehicle in which the lift or ramp is located will be removed from service, repaired, and placed in service no earlier than the beginning of the next service day unless doing so would reduce the transportation service that BMT ZIP provides and there is no spare vehicle available to take the place of the one with the inoperable lift or ramp. In that case, the vehicle with the inoperable lift or ramp may stay in service for no more than three (3) days from the day on which the inoperability was discovered. [49 CFR 37.163d &(e)]

4. If a vehicle with an inoperable lift or ramp is operating on a route and the headway to the next accessible vehicle on the route is more than thirty (30) minutes, BMT ZIP will provide alternative transportation to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the vehicle because the lift or ramp is inoperable. [49 CFR 37.163(e)]

OTHER MOBILITY AIDS & EQUIPMENT

- 1. BMT ZIP will allow service animals on its vehicles and facilities. [49 37.167(d)] A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal trained to work for an individual with a disability. No other animals will be permitted.*
- 2. BMT ZIP will allow any reasonable breathing aid on its vehicles, including portable oxygen tanks and respirators. [49 CFR 37.167(h)]*

Operators on paratransit services will make all attempts to secure standard mobility devices. However, suppose a mobility device exceeds the standard size. In that case, the operator may ask the rider to transfer to a seat, as it may be challenging to safely secure the passenger within the mobility.

Device. The rider chooses to transfer or remain in their mobility device. In the case of refusal, other accommodations may be made. **Paratransit Services strongly recommends that children four and under be secured in a child safety seat or if a rider travels with a child four years of age or younger or weighs 40 pounds or less.** Paratransit Services does not provide child safety seats for children.

WHEN TO BE READY (ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES)

All passengers are reminded that BMT ZIP is a public transportation service. This means you will be sharing rides with other customers. This also implies that trip lengths can be comparable to a fixed-route trip, which includes the time it takes a passenger to travel to a bus stop and wait for a fixed-route bus. You also may have to arrive earlier than desired.

You may request consideration for a no-earlier-than-arrival time or a no-later-than pickup time when scheduling your trip. We will try to accommodate your trips as best we can; however, schedules will be based on the total number of passengers traveling that day while following ADA regulations.

CAN A BMT ZIP OPERATOR ASSIST ME?

BMT ZIP provides an “Assist-to-Door” service for customers who cannot independently walk or roll from the front door of their home to a BMT ZIP van parked curbside (but not to the inside of the building). Examples of a person with a disability needing “Assist-to-Door” services include:

- Someone unable to self-propel a manual mobility device.
- Someone who cannot follow the path to or from a van without guidance.
- Someone who needs help to maintain their balance.

Assist-to-Door service can also be provided at a customer’s destination (bank, shopping center, church, medical office, etc.) and for the return home trip. Customers who are approved for Assist-to-Door service can expect their BMT ZIP van operator (driver) to:

- Physically push the customer’s manual mobility device.
- Offer directions, verbally or by light touch, to keep the customer on the right path; or
- Allow the customer to hold the van operator’s hand or forearm for balance.

Paratransit operators will not operate the controls of an electric mobility device and will not carry a customer or bear the customer’s weight.

This service will not be provided at workshops, dialysis clinics, or adult day activity centers when staff are available to help and is not offered to customers with “Do Not.”

Leave Alone” status. Customers must also promptly appear when the van arrives. BMT ZIP sends phone calls when a van is on the way, and Assist-to-Door is not a van arrival notification service.

Customers who require Van Operator assistance at the origin and destination stage of all BMT ZIP trips must complete a brief application before taking a trip to establish the need for full-time (i. e., at all origins and destinations) assistance. Approval is contingent upon a safety inspection at a customer’s residence to establish the presence of a suitable ramp, steps, and pathway and a reasonable distance between the customer’s doors and van. If a customer requires Assist-to-Door service for all BMT ZIP trips, please get in touch with BMT ZIP Mobility General Manager by phone at (409) 835-7895. Van Operators can also assist customers upon request to or from the van at an unfamiliar location or down steps. Customers who need occasional assistance at their homes should inform the Reservation Agent at the BMT ZIP Office when making a reservation.

Assist-to-door service DOES NOT include any of the following:

- Assisting passengers on unsafe or steeply inclined mobility ramps or stairs.
- Walking through the door of a house, apartment, or building.
- Locking/unlocking doors or activating/deactivating house alarms.

- Loading/unloading personal items.
- Lifting or carrying a customer.
- Pushing a mobility device on/off the step.

If you have any questions, please call BMT ZIP Reservations at (409) 835-7895.

RIDER ACCOMMODATIONS

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) may accompany a registered Paratransit rider at no additional charge. Your file must indicate that you are eligible to have a PCA travel with you. You must reserve space for your PCA when scheduling your trip. Suppose a vehicle is dispatched for a passenger who utilizes a PCA, and the PCA is unavailable, and it is determined that a PCA is no longer required. In that case, documentation to this effect may be required by BMT ZIP. Guests are welcome to ride with you but will pay the same fare as the customer per trip. Due to limited space, each rider is allowed one guest per trip. You must reserve space for your guest (including children) when scheduling your trip. Seating for more than one guest is on a "space available" basis when scheduling your trips. Children accompanying you are considered traveling guests. An adult must accompany children under the age of 5. **Paratransit Services strongly recommends that children four (4) and under be secured in a child safety seat traveling with a child who is four years of age or younger or weighs 40 pounds or less.** Paratransit Services does not provide child safety seats for children.

Special Note: PCAs and guests must have the exact origin and destination points as the eligible demand response passenger. Trips to accommodate guests and PCA (pick-ups and drop-offs) are not allowed.

PACKAGES

Carry-on packages are limited to two (2) grocery bags or similar-sized items on board the Paratransit vehicles. Operators are not required to assist the rider in carrying the packages to and from the same sidewalk or waiting area where the rider boards.

VISITORS

Out-of-town visitors who are ADA certified in other cities or have obvious mobility limitations can use BMT ZIP services temporarily. Visitors must contact BMT ZIP Office Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at 409-835-7895. Applying two (2) weeks before service is required is recommended.

Once this is done, reservations can be made up to one (1) day in advance. The policies and procedures in this guide apply to visitors.

Visitors can use BMT ZIP Service for 21 days. Receiving service beyond 21 days will require the person to apply for BMT ZIP service and an eligibility determination by BMT ZIP Lift Services.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Guide dogs and other service animals are allowed to accompany you if this need is indicated in your file. Please inform Scheduling if a service animal will accompany you when scheduling your trips.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

Subscription Service is limited to riders traveling to the same place at the same time at least three (3) times a week. BMT ZIP reserves the right to restrict and prioritize Subscription Services to maintain a maximum level of fifty percent (50%) as the ADA requires when no excess demand capacity is available. BMT ZIP will terminate any Subscription Service canceled 50% or more during any 30 days or if there is a consistent pattern of cancellations of any part of a subscription.

Eligible passengers can schedule subscriptions for repetitive trips for employment, school, and acute medical treatment (i.e., kidney dialysis, chemotherapy, and physical therapy.) To maximize multi-loading, pick-up times will be negotiated up to thirty (30) minutes before or after the pick-up time requested by the passenger.

NO-SHOW, LATE CANCELLATIONS, AND CANCEL-AT-DOOR POLICY

An individual's BMT ZIP service may be suspended if they frequently fail to appear for a scheduled trip, i.e., No-Show, or repeatedly cancel late.

ABOUT NO-SHOWS

If the vehicle arrives within the approved window, waits five minutes, and the passenger does not appear, it will be considered a No-Show. Before a No-Show is determined, BMT ZIP will make every effort to contact the passenger. This may include:

- Lightly honking the horn during reasonable hours (8 a.m. – 10 p.m.).
- The driver knocks on the door.
- Dispatch calling the passenger using the telephone numbers on file.

Note: A No-Show will not be authorized by Dispatch until all attempts have been made to contact the passenger

If the vehicle arrives before the 30-minute window, you must only board once your scheduled time starts.

ABOUT LATE CANCELLATIONS

A trip canceled by the passenger within at least one (1) hour of the scheduled 30-minute window is a late cancellation. Late cancellations will be considered the same as a No-Show. This includes cancellations at the door.

- We encourage passengers to call in cancellation as soon as they know they will not require our transportation services.

BMT ZIP understands that passengers will experience unplanned events that prevent them from taking a scheduled trip. However, BMT ZIP has a strict No-Show/Late Cancellations Policy to prevent abuse. The reason for such a strict policy is that No-Show trips mean a ride may have been denied to another person.

To avoid No-Shows, passengers are reminded to be ready at the beginning of the 30-minute window when the trip was scheduled; drivers should wait at most five minutes after arriving for passengers to board the bus. **Description:**

NO SHOW

A No-Show occurs when you fail to board the paratransit vehicle within five (5) minutes after it arrives within the ready-time window.

LATE CANCELLATION

A Late Cancellation occurs when you fail to cancel your scheduled trip at least one (1) hour before the start of the ready-time window.

CANCEL AT THE DOOR

Canceling your trip when the operator arrives is considered a Cancel at the Door.

Note: Trips missed for reasons outside the passenger's control or those missed by BMT ZIP will NOT count as a No-Show. You have the right to appeal any violations or proposed suspension of services following the same appeal process mentioned under Application for services.

RESOLVING DISPUTES

Every attempt will be made to resolve disagreements concerning specific No-Shows, late cancellations, and cancellations at the door. Any suspension of service will include the opportunity for the passenger to submit a written appeal, which must be described as No-Show occurrences.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Riders are asked to follow these rules of conduct to ensure the safety and comfort of all riders and the operator.

- No physical abuse of another rider or the operator.
- No abusive, threatening, or obscene language or actions.
- Food and or/beverages are prohibited unless necessary for dietary and medical purposes.
- Smoking is not allowed on board the vehicles.

- No riding under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- No deliberate fare evasion.
- No operating or tampering with equipment while on board a Paratransit vehicle.
- No radios, cassette tape players, compact disc players, or other excessive sound-generating equipment will be played aboard the vehicles.
- No tipping or other gratuities are allowed.

Riders who violate rules of conduct are subject to penalties, up to and including suspension of service, and would be cited for disruption of transportation.

DIRECT THREAT

The ADA advises explicitly that paratransit service may be refused to persons with a documented history of uncontrolled, unpredictably disruptive, aggressive, or threatening behaviors which may pose a direct threat to the safe operation of the vehicle and transport of all passengers. Accordingly, BMT ZIP reserves the right to refuse, modify, suspend, or terminate service to customers who may pose a threat. BMT ZIP may also require such a customer to travel in the company of a **responsible travel attendant** for all BMT ZIP trips.

SERVICE SUSPENSION/TERMINATION APPEAL PROCESS

Note: Riders who engage in physical abuse or cause bodily injury to another rider or operator may be subject to immediate and permanent suspension and possible criminal prosecution.

A rider who disputes the basis for a suspension or termination of service may request an appeal hearing by writing:

BMT ZIP
550 Milam St.
Beaumont, Texas 77701

PARATRANSIT FARE STRUCTURE LEVELS

Eligible Disabled Person	\$2.50 per one-way trip
Monthly Pass (calendar month)	\$80.00
Ticket Book (10 one-way rides)	\$25.00
Guest	\$2.50 per one-way trip
Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)	No Charge – must travel with an eligible

	passenger.
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*Application and ID Card has a total fee of \$5.00. If denied for paratransit services, the application and id card fee will be returned to the applicant. *

Paratransit Fare Tickets

All eligible riders, regardless of age, must pay the exact fare when boarding. Operators cannot give change. BMT ZIP - Regular, Plus, and Premium tickets may be purchased at the following location:

BMT ZIP
550 Milam St.
Beaumont, Texas
77701

HELPFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Please call (409) 835-7895 to contact the following:	Please call (409) 835-7895 to contact the following:
Paratransit Services Scheduling Cancellations/Confirmation Certification Subscription Services Complaints/Commendations	BMT ZIP Customer Service Bus Route Information BMT ZIP Lost and Found

HELPFUL ADDRESSES

BMT ZIP Paratransit Services Operations	BMT ZIP Office 550 Milam St. Beaumont, Texas 77701
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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

We want to hear from you. So please get in touch with BMT ZIP at 409-835-7895 to leave your comments, complaints, commendations, suggestions, or recommendations.

Customer Comment/Complaint Procedure

BMT ZIP customer comment/complaint procedure has been established to ensure that riders of the system have an easy and accessible way to provide feedback to the agency. When making a complaint, please try to provide as much detail as possible so we can adequately address your concern. In addition, the following information should accompany all customer comments/complaints:

- *Type of comment/complaint: Fixed Route Service, BMT ZIP Paratransit Service, ADA Fixed Route Service, ADA BMT ZIP Paratransit Service, Title IV.*
- *Name, address, and phone number (or person may remain anonymous).*
- *The date and time of the incident.*
- *Vehicle number (if applicable) and the dispatcher or driver name.*
- *Description of the complaint, commendation, or suggestion; please provide as much information as possible.*

Filing a Complaint

For non-urgent items (a complaint regarding past service, suggestion, idea, etc.), please get in touch with BMT ZIP via one of the following methods:

- *By Calling (409)835-7895*
- *Website: www.beaumonttransit.com*
- *By letter to: BMT ZIP Paratransit service 550 Milam St.
Beaumont, Texas 77701*

Feedback Review Process: *BMT ZIP's Transit Supervisor will handle complaints, comments, and suggestions. BMT ZIP will ensure that appropriate actions are taken to resolve the cause of the complaint so that service is improved going forward. All feedback will be reviewed and distributed to the appropriate department(s) with follow-up to the customer by BMT ZIP staff within a set goal of 72 hours.*