

WHAT IS PARATRANSIT SERVICE AND HOW CAN I GET IT?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires most public transit systems to provide "paratransit" services. Paratransit is for people with disabilities who cannot use the "fixed route" bus or rail service (also known as "mainline" service). Paratransit must provide service that is comparable to the service provided to people who use the fixed route system. Paratransit is a civil right. This document answers some of the most common questions about how to get paratransit service.

What Is Paratransit

1. What Is Paratransit Service?

Paratransit provides transportation for people with disabilities who are unable to use the regular, fixed route transit service that serves their region. Paratransit usually provide door-to-door service for people who call to reserve a ride.

2. When and Where Does Paratransit Go?

Paratransit must be available in the same service areas and during the same hours of operation as the rest of the transit system. Paratransit service must be provided as long as the trip starts and ends within 3/4 of a mile of a bus route or rail station.

3. Do I Have to Pay to Use Paratransit?

Yes. If you are eligible, the transit system can charge you a fare, but it cannot charge paratransit riders more than twice the regular fixed route fare.

4. How Far in Advance Do I Have to Call? Will I Get a Ride at the Time of Day That I Ask For?

Paratransit must be provided to all eligible riders if it is requested one day in advance. The ride must come within one hour of the requested time. (For example, if you request a pick-up at 8 a.m., the paratransit service must arrive no earlier than 7 a.m. and no later than 9 a.m.)

Who Gets to Use Paratransit

5. Who Qualifies for Paratransit Services?

Not everyone with a disability qualifies for paratransit services. Paratransit is for people with disabilities who are unable to use a fixed route system. Some people might be eligible for paratransit services on all trips they make. Other people might be eligible only for certain trips, under certain circumstances. To be eligible, a person must fit into one of the ADA's three eligibility categories.

6. What Are the Three Categories of Eligibility for Paratransit?

Persons with disabilities are eligible for paratransit if they are in one (or more) of the following categories:

- Category 1 includes people who can't get on, ride, or get off of a bus or train, even if it is accessible, because of their disability. People in Category 1 can use paratransit for all trips that they make. Here are some examples of people in Category 1:
 - *Example A:* a person who needs an attendant to help get on, ride, or get off the bus or train.
 - *Example B:* people with cognitive disabilities, if they don't know where to get off the bus or how to go to their destination from the bus stop.
 - *Example C:* people with visual impairments, if they don't have the travel skills needed to navigate the route to their destination.
- Category 2 includes people who can ride accessible fixed-route transit, but there is no accessible transit available on the route they want to travel. Accessible fixed-route transit may not be available, for example, if the accessible vehicle is down for maintenance, or if the vehicle has no wheelchair lift or the lift is not working. (This second eligibility category originally covered many people with mobility impairments, but the number of people in this category should go down as transit systems become more accessible.)
- Category 3 includes people with a disability that prevents them from getting to or from the transit stop. In this case, the impairment must prevent travel to or from a stop; significant inconvenience or difficulty is not enough. Architectural barriers (like steps or curbs) or environmental conditions (like distance, terrain, weather) may make a person eligible for certain trips. Some examples of this category are:
 - *Example A:* Mary uses a wheelchair, and the buses in her city are wheelchair accessible. She regularly takes one bus route to work and another to visit her friend. There are curb ramps on the street leading to the bus stop that takes her to work, but there are no curb ramps on the streets leading to the bus stop that goes to her friend's house. Mary would be eligible for paratransit services when she visits her friend, but not going to work.
 - *Example B:* John has a health condition that makes it difficult for him to walk long distances. The bus stop near his home is less than one-half mile away, and he is able to walk that distance in pleasant weather. When it gets hot outside, however, John tires much more quickly, and is unable to make it to the bus stop safely. John would be eligible for paratransit services when the temperature became too hot for him to walk to the bus stop.
 - *Example C:* Jane has multiple sclerosis, and it affects her very differently at different times. During certain times, she is able to go to the bus stop or train station by herself, but during other times, she is not able to do so.

7. Can Someone Be Eligible for Some Paratransit Trips, but Not Others?

Yes. A person may be able to use some bus routes but not others. For instance, some bus routes may have accessible vehicles, but other routes may not.

8. Are People with Temporary Disabilities Eligible for Paratransit Services?

Sometimes. A person may be eligible on the basis of either a permanent or a temporary disability, as long as the person meets one of the three eligibility criteria (discussed in Question 6 above).

9. Can I Use Paratransit to Take Me Outside the Normal Service Area of the Rest of the Transit System?

Maybe not. There is a "¾ mile rule" that says that in most cases you are eligible to receive paratransit service only if you start and end your trip within ¾ of a mile of an existing bus route or rail station. There are a few exceptions to the ¾ mile rule, however. Also, some transit providers offer paratransit service outside of the ¾ mile limit, even though the ADA does not require it. Be sure to ask your transit authority about their local rules.

Attendants and Companions

10. If I am eligible for paratransit, can my Personal Assistant or attendant ride with me? What about a friend or family member?

Yes, you can always ride with a personal assistant or attendant as well as one friend or family member, as long as you reserve space for them when you call to arrange the ride. They may ride with you even if this means that there is less room for other eligible riders. Additional companions may also ride if space is available. Everyone riding with you must get on with you and get off with you.

11. Does My Attendant or Companion Have to Pay to Ride with Me?

Your attendant rides free if you are approved by the transit provider as eligible to use a personal assistant. If the transit authority agrees that you may use a personal assistant, you can choose anyone to be your personal assistant on any given trip. Personal assistants do not need to have their own paratransit certificate or card. Friends or family members pay the same fare as you do.

Suspension of Paratransit Services

12. Can I Be Refused Paratransit Because of My Behavior?

Yes, a person who engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct may be refused service, using the same standards for exclusion that would apply to any other person who acts in such an inappropriate way. But you cannot be excluded just because your appearance or involuntary behavior may offend, annoy, or inconvenience transit workers or others.

13. Can My Paratransit Service Be Stopped If I Miss Some of the Trips I Have Scheduled?

Yes. The transit system can suspend your paratransit service for a reasonable period of time, if you have "pattern or practice" of missing scheduled trips. The purpose of this rule is to deal with chronic no-shows.

14. What Does "Pattern or Practice" Mean?

A "pattern or practice" means intentional, repeated or regular actions. It does not mean accidental, one-time, or isolated incidents. Only actions within your control count as part of a "pattern or practice." Missed trips due to driver error (for example, arriving very late, going to the wrong address, or going to the wrong building entrance) do not count as part of a "pattern or practice."

15. What Is the Procedure for Suspending a Passenger for Missed Trips?

If a transit system wants to suspend you, it first has to notify you in writing, telling you the days and times of your missed trips, and how long the suspension will last. You must be given a chance to be heard and to tell your side of the story. Until you have been given that chance, you will continue to receive paratransit service.

16. What If the Transit System Decides to Go Through with the Suspension after I Tell My Side of the Story?

If the transit system decides to go through with the suspension, it must give you that decision in writing, tell you the reasons for it, and also tell you how long the suspension will last.

17. Is There Anything Else I Can Do after That?

Yes. You can appeal the suspension decision, just like you can appeal the original decision about whether you get to use paratransit. (For information on how to appeal, see Questions 34-44 below.) If you appeal, the suspension is put on hold during the appeal, so your paratransit service is continued during the appeal.

Complementary Paratransit Service for Visitors

18. What If I Visit a Different City? Can I Use Their Paratransit Service?

Yes. If another city has paratransit, they have to allow visitors to use their service if they are eligible.

19. If I Am Visiting, How Do I Show That I Am Eligible to Use Paratransit?

Once your application is approved in your home community, the transit authority will send you a card or certificate stating under what conditions or situations you are eligible for paratransit services. This card or certificate will be enough to show that you are eligible for paratransit in the other cities that you visit. Visitors are also eligible if they show proof that they are visiting (that means proof that they reside somewhere else) and proof of their disability (if it is not obvious). For example, proof of disability might include a letter from a doctor or rehabilitation professional. Once this documentation is presented and is satisfactory, the transit system must allow you to use paratransit if you say that you are unable to use the fixed route transit system.

20. Is There Anything Else I Should Do If I Am Visiting?

When visiting other areas, remember to call the local transit authority for details about how their system works. In general, they are only required to provide paratransit services within 3/4 of a mile of the local fixed route transit system, and only during normal hours of operation. The conditions that limit your paratransit eligibility in your home area also apply to any area you are visiting. The fares

you pay for paratransit services, how you reserve a ride, and rules about personal assistants and companions may vary somewhat in different transit systems. When visiting, be sure to ask what the local rules are.

21. Are There Any Other Limits for Paratransit Service to Visitors?

Yes. A transit system is not required to provide service to a visitor for more than 21 days from the date of that visitor's first paratransit trip. The 21 days may be continuous, or parceled out over several shorter visits. After 21 days, the transportation entity may require the visitor to apply for paratransit eligibility in the usual local manner.

Eligibility Process

22. What Is the Paratransit Application Process Like?

It varies somewhat. Each transit system that is required to provide paratransit service is also required to set up a process for determining eligibility. But remember, transit providers do not establish their own rules for who is eligible and who is not. The ADA provides the eligibility rules that transit systems must follow. (Those rules are described in Question 6 above.)

23. What Should I Do When I Apply for Paratransit Services, in Order to Make Sure That I Have the Best Chance of Getting Approved?

When filling out the application form, give as much information as you can. Try to give all the documentation mentioned in the application. It is common for applications to be denied when information is missing. Here are some more suggestions:

- *Step One: Figure out what categories you are eligible for*

For each category listed in Question 6 above, provide detailed information and documentation that explains why you are eligible for that category. Some types of documentation will support your claim in more than one category. You should consider your potential travel throughout the entire bus or rail system during all seasons, not just those in your immediate neighborhood or those that you normally use. For example, you may be able to get to the bus stop near your home, but not the one near your workplace or the movie theater, or near other future travel destinations. Think about your ability to deal with the variety of environments you might face across town, and also think about whether your condition makes travel harder for you at certain times.

- *Step Two: Prepare your supporting documents*

There are no limits on the amount or type of documentation that people with disabilities may use to prove their paratransit eligibility. This means that you can use any information or documents that will help you show that you cannot use the fixed route transit system.

It is not enough to show that riding the bus or train is harder for you. To be successful, you must accurately show that you are actually unable to ride the bus or train, either some of the time or all of the time.

Be sure to include information on any "secondary" disabilities you have, such as disorientation, fatigue, or difficulties with balance.

Documentation may include any or all of the following:

- A. A detailed statement from a disability-service provider (independent living specialist, rehabilitation counselor, travel trainer, employment-support specialist, etc.). This should explain how your disability, or its symptoms or effects, prevent you from using the mainline system.
 - B. A detailed statement from a medical professional (physician, psychologist, therapist, etc.). Medical or disability-related information should explain how your disability, or its symptoms or effects, prevent you from using the mainline system.
 - C. A detailed personal journal that shows the impact of travel on your disability, health, energy, stamina, etc. This can be as detailed as you wish, as long as it is clear. For example, one entry might read: "May 31, 2003: I went four blocks to the store this afternoon. While at the store, I needed to take 20 minutes to rest before getting the energy to shop. When I returned home, I needed to rest for two hours before I had the energy to make dinner."
 - D. A detailed listing of the access barriers that prevent you from traveling to the bus stop or rail station. Some examples of access barriers include no curb cuts on all four corners, no sidewalks, extremely busy intersection with fast "walk/don't walk" cycle, no pedestrian signals, lack of snow removal during winter months, hilly terrain, weather during portions of the year that makes negotiating the distance impossible for you, etc.
 - E. Information about other factors that would prevent you from riding the mainline service. For example, if it is true, you might say: "I could use the mainline bus on cold days if I had assistance to get my coat, gloves, hat and scarf on, but current funding only allows me to hire a personal assistant to come to my home first thing in the morning and at the end of the day, and I cannot wear those warm clothes indoors all day."
- *Step Three: Make the most of the in-person interview (sometimes called a "functional assessment")*

The DOT regulations allow each transit provider to set up its own system for determining ADA paratransit eligibility. Providers may require in-person interviews, with or without functional assessments or tests. The functional assessment is a process to help determine whether you have the ability to use fixed route bus and/or rail service and, if so, under what circumstances. Functional assessments are evaluations that assess physical, visual, or cognitive ability. They may include a simulated trip to and from a bus, a simulated bus trip, boarding a bus, negotiating a curb or curb cut, crossing the street, etc. The assessment may test your balance, strength, coordination, range of motion, bus travel skills, community safety skills, and general orientation. Variables in the environment as well as the person's ability to perform the tasks required to use the bus may be considered.

If you use a power wheelchair or mobility device, be prepared to explain how your travel is still limited by other factors, such as the lack of sidewalks or safe paths of travel, heat or cold, etc.

If the assessment does not look at one of your disabling conditions, mention it. Make sure it is being considered in some other manner (for example, consideration of the information you provide, or of documentation from medical professionals, as discussed above). Some disabilities cannot be evaluated by a functional assessment (and the transit provider should know this). Examples include seizure disorders, psychiatric disabilities, and variable conditions such as multiple sclerosis. If you

feel that some aspect of your disability's impact on your inability to use mainline transit is not getting full consideration, talk to a supervisor.

- *Step Four: Bring help if you need it*

If you need help during your in-person paratransit eligibility interview or functional assessment, you can bring someone with you. This person could be a friend, family member, advocate, service provider, lawyer, therapist, etc. Talk to this person about how he or she will help you before you go to the assessment. If you need this help, you may be able to get assistance from a Center for Independent Living or other disability service agencies. (See Question 45 below for information on how to contact such groups.)

24. Do I Really Need a Letter from My Doctor?

Yes, probably. Most applications ask for a report from a doctor, so be sure to include a letter from a doctor that explains how your disability affects you. That means that you should show specifically how your disability:

- Prevents you from boarding or riding the local fixed route transit system; or
- Prevents you from getting to a transit stop; or
- Prevents you from getting from a transit stop to the place you are traveling to; or
- Prevents you from boarding or riding the transit system.

Also, the letter should specifically list the types of weather or other special conditions (snow, heat and humidity, extreme cold, etc.) that prevent you from using the transit system. If there are particular physical barriers, such as steep hills, stairs, or lack of sidewalks that prevent you from getting to or from the transit system, these should also be listed in the letter from your doctor.

25. Besides My Doctor, Who Else Could Help?

A letter from your case manager (if you have one) may be a good way to show your eligibility. School records that provide evidence of your disability may also help explain why you should be eligible for paratransit.

26. I Don't Look like I Have a Disability. Will That Make it More Difficult to Get Paratransit Services?

If your "invisible" disability prevents you from making a trip on the fixed transit route, the transit provider should find you eligible for paratransit. Unfortunately, many people with psychiatric or other invisible disabilities have had difficulty. When filling out the application form, you should be sure to provide documentation that your disability prevents you from using the fixed route transit that is in your area.

27. Does it Cost Money to Apply for Paratransit Service?

No. A transit system cannot charge any fees to apply for paratransit service.

28. How Do I Apply for Paratransit Service?

Contact your local transit authority and ask for the paratransit coordinator. Contact information for many of the Texas transit systems is available at http://www.apta.com/links/state_local/tx.cfm. In some cases you may be able to contact the transit authority by e-mail.

The transit authority will send you an application form. If you need the form in an alternative format, tell the transit provider. They are supposed to provide all documents in the format you need.

29. After I Apply, How Long Will I Have to Wait Before I Know If My Application Has Been Approved?

The law requires the transit provider to notify you of their decision within 21 days. If the transit system has not decided within 21 days, you must be treated as eligible and provided service until they finish deciding your application. This is called "presumptive eligibility." If 21 days have passed since you appealed, and you have not gotten the decision, you should contact the transit provider and ask to be declared "presumptively eligible" for paratransit services.

30. How Do I Find out If I Have Been Approved for Paratransit Eligibility?

The transit system must give you its decision in writing.

If they find that you are *not* eligible, they must give you the specific reasons, and those reasons must be based on the evidence in your case. For example, a simple statement that you are denied because you can use fixed route transit is not good enough.

If the transit system finds that you *are* eligible for paratransit, they must provide documentation that includes:

- Your name;
- The name of the transit system;
- The telephone number of the paratransit coordinator;
- The expiration date for your eligibility; and
- Any conditions or limitations on your eligibility, including the use of a personal care attendant.

31. What Do You Mean by "Conditions or Limitations?"

Some people are eligible for some trips but not others. Also, some people are authorized to have a personal care attendant ride free of charge. The documents that you receive should say this. For example, the documentation may say that the person is eligible only when the temperature falls below a certain point, or only when the person is going somewhere that is not on an accessible bus route, or only for non-work trips, etc.

32. Will a Note from My Doctor Be Enough to Prove That I Am Eligible for Paratransit Services?

Not necessarily. A doctor's note alone does not determine eligibility. Instead, eligibility requires proof that you meet one of the eligibility categories (in Question 6 above). That may require a "functional evaluation." Although an evaluation by a doctor or other professional may be used as part of the process, a particular diagnosis alone may not automatically qualify you for paratransit eligible. The question is whether you can use the fixed route system on your own, and that is primarily a transportation decision, not a medical decision.

33. Once the Transit System Finds Me Eligible, Can They Make Me Reapply Every So Often?

Yes. Recertification at "reasonable intervals" is allowed. A reasonable interval for recertification is probably between one and three years. Of course, you can apply to change the conditions of your eligibility at any time.

Paratransit Appeals Process

34. What Can I Do If My Application for Paratransit Service Is Denied?

You can appeal. Each transit system must have an administrative appeal process, and you must be given a chance to be heard in person and to present information as part of that appeal.

35. What Should I Do If I Am Declared Eligible for Only Some of the Paratransit Services That I Need?

You can appeal any decision that limits your access to paratransit services. The transit authority must give you the specific reasons, in writing, why you were declared ineligible for any level of paratransit services. The process for appealing partial eligibility is the same as if you were denied any eligibility.

36. What Should I Do If I Am Denied Because They Said My Application Didn't Have All the Information That They Needed to Make a Decision?

You should contact them right away. They may change their minds if you can explain to them why you are unable to use the regular fixed route transit system. If, however, the transit provider continues to say that you are not eligible for paratransit, you can appeal their decision. Before you have your appeal hearing, be sure to get letters and documents that explain how you are affected by your disability. It may take a few weeks to get letters from a doctor or records that contain this information. Start gathering these documents as soon as possible.

37. If I Appeal, Will I Need a Lawyer?

No. In most cases, you will be able to represent yourself, or you can have a friend or family member help you. If you feel comfortable talking to the members of the appeal board by yourself, you can represent yourself. If you would rather have someone else speak for you, choose someone who is familiar with you and your disability. You might be able to get someone from an Independent Living Center, or other advocacy group, to help you. (To locate the Independent Living Center nearest you, see Question 45 below.)

38. How Do I Appeal?

When the transit provider notifies you that your application has been denied, they must give you specific reasons why, and they must do it in writing. If you think they are wrong, you should contact them right away. The transit provider must have a process that allows you to appeal. They will usually provide you information on how to appeal when they notify you that your application is denied. If they fail to do this, however, contact them and ask for the information on how to appeal.

39. How Long Do I Have to File an Appeal?

You should file any appeal within 60 days of the denial of your initial application.

40. How Should I Prepare for My Appeal?

You should review the list of suggestions in Question 23 above. You should also think about what new documents you could provide. The eligibility denial letter you received is required to state specifically the reason for the denial. Think carefully about the reason(s) given in your denial letter, and be sure you talk about them during your appeal. If you don't understand the reason why you were denied, ask someone who does. When you prepare your appeal, it is important that you understand the specific reasons the transit provider gave for denying your application. Your task is to convince the appeals board that the reasoning used to deny your application was wrong. Be prepared to talk about each reason that was given by the transit provider when they denied your application.

41. What If They Did Not Give Me Specific Reasons for Denying Me?

If the transit authority did not give you specific reasons why you were denied, or if they provided reasons that were vague or unclear, contact the transit authority immediately. Tell them that you intend to file an appeal, and that the reasons they gave in their denial are unclear. Politely but firmly request that they clarify, in writing, why you were denied paratransit eligibility. The transit authority may or may not agree to provide you with more specific information.

If they do, you may want to wait to file your appeal until you receive that information. Don't wait too long, though! If the transit authority is dragging their feet, go ahead and file. Remember you only have 60 days to file after you are originally denied eligibility.

If they don't give you more specific information, file your appeal as soon as you can. Make sure to state in your appeal that no specific reasons were given by the transit authority in their denial.

42. Who Decides My Appeal?

That depends, but the person who made the decision against you cannot be the person who decides your appeal, and in most cases that person should not even be involved in the appeals decision.

43. How Long Will It Take to Get a Decision in My Appeal?

The appeal board must make a decision within 30 days from the time you file your appeal. They do not have to provide paratransit during the appeal (unless you are appealing a suspension for missed trips; see Question 15 above). But if they do not decide within 30 days, they must allow you to begin using paratransit until they decide your appeal.

44. How Do I Find out the Results of My Appeal?

You must get written notice of the appeals decision and the reasons for it.

Getting More Help if you Lose Your Appeal

45. What Can I Do If I Lose My Appeal?

- File a complaint with the FTA Office of Civil Rights

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Civil Rights is responsible for making sure that transit providers comply with the paratransit rules. If the FTA finds violations, they will usually give the transit system a certain amount of time to fix them.

It seems like the FTA usually doesn't second-guess particular eligibility appeal decisions, but it is still very important that FTA hear about problems with eligibility denials, especially serious problems and patterns (that is, when the same problem affects more than one person). Eligibility complaints to FTA may be more effective if you can show that certain important information was disregarded by the transit agency, or if multiple complaints are submitted by several people against the same transit agency, especially if all are submitted together.

To file a complaint in writing, you should either fill out the FTA's Complaint Form or send a letter to: Director, FTA Office of Civil Rights, 400 7th Street, S.W., Room 9102, Washington, D.C. 20590. Include as many details as possible. The FTA has more information on its website at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/transit_data_info/ada/ada_info/14529_ENG_HTML.htm.

The FTA's ADA complaint form is also on that website at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/14531_14889_ENG_HTML.htm. You may also contact the FTA by e-mail at: ada.assistance@fta.dot.gov.

- Contact your local Independent Living Center, Protection & Advocacy agency, or other disability advocacy agency

You may find out that other people have had similar experiences when attempting to get paratransit. An organized effort to address problems with a transit provider may result in an improved, fair process for everyone.

To find the Independent Living Center nearest you, call the National Council on Independent Living at 877-525-3400 (V/TTY) or go to <http://www.virtualcil.net/cils/>, or <http://www.ilru.org/jump1.htm>.

To find the Protection and Advocacy agency for your state, contact the National Association of Protection & Advocacy Systems at 202-408-9514 (voice), 202-408-9521 (TTY), go to http://napas.org/other%20pages/P&A-CAP_list_10-03.htm, or e-mail them at: info@napas.org.

In Texas, the Protection and Advocacy agency is Disability Rights Texas. To find out how to contact the Disability Rights Texas office nearest you, call 1-800-252-9108, or go to <http://www.DisabilityRightsTx.org/contact.htm>. Note, however, that the kinds of paratransit cases that we take are limited. Even if Disability Rights Texas cannot represent you, however, we may be able to give you advice, or refer you to a lawyer who might represent you in court.

- File a lawsuit in federal court

The ADA paratransit rules can be enforced by filing a lawsuit, if necessary. If you cannot get legal assistance from your state's P&A or another legal assistance agency, you can contact your local bar association for referral to a lawyer or you can file a lawsuit yourself, without a lawyer ("pro se").

To find out more about obtaining a lawyer, contact the lawyer referral service at 1-800-252-9690, or the American Bar Association at 1-800-285-2221, askaba@abanet.org, or www.abanet.org.

Other Sources of Help

46. Where Can I Get More Information about Paratransit Eligibility?

For more information:

- Regional ADA Technical Assistance Centers, 1-800-949-4232;
- Federal Transit Administration ADA Toll Free Technical Assistance Line, 1-888-446-4511 (Voice) or 1-800-877-8339 (TTY); <http://www.fta.dot.gov/>
- The unofficial, but informative, Paratransit Eligibility Manual, at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/ADA/ada.html>;
- The actual ADA rules relating to transportation of people with disabilities, and the agency guidance on those rules, are available at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/legal/ada/FEDREG1001.HTM>.
- Materials from a presentation on ADA transportation issues by Marilyn Golden of DREDF, done for the ILRU in two parts, on Jan. 29, 2003, <http://www.ilru.org/online/archive/2003/01-29-MG.html>, and on Feb. 12, 2003, <http://www.ilru.org/online/archive/2003/02-12-MG.html>

Disability Rights Texas' goal is to make each handout understandable by and useful to the general public. If you have suggestions on how this handout can be improved, please contact Disability Rights Texas at the address and telephone number shown above or e-mail our agency at info@disabilityrightstx.org. Thank you for your assistance. This handout is available in Braille and/or on audio tape upon request. Disability Rights Texas strives to update its materials on an annual basis, and this handout is based upon the law at the time it was written. The law changes frequently and is subject to various interpretations by different courts. Future changes in the law may make some information in this handout inaccurate. The handout is not intended to and does not replace an attorney's advice or assistance based on your particular situation.