



Shared Ride Policy

SARTA 
ProLine



SARTA 

SARTAonline.com
330-477-2782

For Reservations, Call:
330-455-2292

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority
Proline “Shared Ride” Service Policy*

A passenger who is eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will receive “shared ride” paratransit service under the guidelines and fare structure of the ADA rulings and SARTA’s Proline Policy.

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A. Travel Training

SARTA highly recommends its nationally recognized travel training program for new passengers using fixed route or Proline service. This program will enable any individual interested in riding SARTA to gain the confidence and knowledge necessary to utilize SARTA services. Participation in this program will help ensure successful navigation of SARTA’s Proline system to meet all mobility needs.

Our Travel Training Program teaches how to:

- Use SARTA’s Fixed Route or Proline Services
- Plan a trip on Proline & fixed route, and
- Read fixed route schedules and plan a trip on either fixed route or Proline
- Locate and Transfer to other Buses
- Pay Fares and Purchase Tickets and Passes

To help make trainees comfortable with the SARTA service, we are offering a free 31-day fixed-route pass to any individual over 6 years of age who successfully completes the travel training program or 2 one-ride Proline tickets for Proline customers who complete the training. (Residents are welcome to take the course multiple times, but are only eligible for one 31-day pass and up to 2 Proline one-ride tickets.) To schedule a training session, call (toll free) 1-855-TT-SARTA.

B. Scheduling Policy

Once you have received your eligibility letter, you are registered in the Proline program and can begin to schedule rides.

All trips may be scheduled four days in advance (See chart below). Proline reservations should be made at least one (1) business day in advance of the day you need your trip for better scheduling opportunities.

To increase the opportunities of availability, you should call up to four (See chart below) business days in advance to schedule a ride. The earlier you call, the more likely there will be availability.

	To schedule trips for:
Monday	Tuesday - Friday
Tuesday	Wednesday - Saturday
Wednesday	Thursday - Monday
Thursday	Friday - Tuesday
Friday	Saturday - Wednesday

Note: If availability allows, same day trips and changes to previously scheduled trips are accepted, but only with a minimum of two (2) hours notice. The Reservationist or Dispatcher will make this determination based on availability.

Scheduling may be done by appointment time or pick-up time. You must be at any location for a minimum of 30 minutes.

To schedule by appointment time, tell the reservationist the time you would like to be at your destination or appointment. You will be given a window that will get you to your destination on-time or up to one hour early.

To schedule by pick-up time, tell the reservationist what time you will be ready and would like picked up. You will be given a window that starts within one hour of your requested time.

For example, if you are off work at 1:00pm, you may receive a window of 1:00 - 1:30. Please note that you may be on the bus for up to 90 minutes and you are required to be at your next destination for at least 30 minutes. As a result, any subsequent trips will not be scheduled for 2 hours after the end of the pick-up window. In this example, the next pick-up window cannot start until 3:30.

To schedule online:

Schedule online at <http://goline.sartaonline.com/hiwire?.a=pHome> or click the Goline logo at www.sartaonline.com Monday – Saturday from 7:30 am – 8:00 pm. You will need your Client ID Number and password. We recommend saving this in your favorites.

To schedule by phone with a live reservationist:

Call 330-455-2292 Press option 2 to schedule a ride. If a reservationist is not immediately available, you may hold or enter your number and your call will be returned in the order it was received.

To schedule, cancel or review trips by phone with the automated system:

Call 330-430-1745 and follow the prompts. Have your Client ID Number and password ready.

C. Trip Denials

SARTA has a goal of no denials for ADA trips as defined by ADA law. The person taking the call at SARTA will make every attempt to satisfy your trip request including offering a different time slot than initially requested. This includes searching for an available time one hour before or one hour after the requested time.

D. Fares**

The fare is \$2.25 per trip. Cash may be deposited in the fare box, or tickets may be purchased in any of SARTA's four transit centers. Tickets may also be purchased through the SARTA website (www.sartaonline.com/tickets). Tickets may be purchased in single-ride (\$2.25) and 10-ride (\$22.50) denominations. SARTA also offers a convenient monthly pass for \$63.00.

**Fares are subject to change.

The ADA fare will be charged at all times for those passengers who are ADA qualified. Fare must be paid when boarding the bus. In the unforeseen, rare occasion, that a passenger does not have the proper fare that ride will be permitted and noted in the passenger's file. The passenger will be required to submit the correct amount for the unpaid ride by check or money order to **SARTA Proline Department at 1600 Gateway Blvd SE, Canton, Ohio 44707** within five (5) business days. SARTA reserves the right to make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

E. To Cancel or Check on a Ride

You may cancel through the automated system 24 hours a day by calling 330-430-1745.

You may also cancel online at <http://goline.sartaonline.com/hiwire?.a=pHome> or click the Goline logo at www.sartaonline.com.

You may call SARTA's Priority Care Line at 330-455-2292 (option 1) anytime between the hours of 5:00 am and 1:30 am to cancel or check on the status of a scheduled ride. If a reservationist is not available, you may hold or enter your number and your call will be returned in the order it was received. If you reach a recording, please leave the following information:

- Client Proline ID Number
- The name of the person whose trip is being canceled
- Date of the trip you want to cancel
- The time(s) of the trip you are canceling
- A phone number where you can be reached

F. Advance Cancel Policy

SARTA prefers that you cancel a trip with as much advance notice as possible. Any trip canceled before the day of the scheduled ride is considered an 'Advance Cancel'.

G. No-Show/Late Cancel/Cancel at the Door Policy

No-Show definition

A no-show is any trip scheduled but not taken due to passenger error or circumstance. All subsequent trips for that day will be automatically canceled. 2 points will be assessed.

Late Cancel definition

Trips not canceled at least 60 minutes or 1 hour prior to the start of the pick-up window. 1 point will be assessed.

Cancel at the Door definition

Trips canceled after the bus has arrived at the pickup point within the 30 minute pick-up window is considered a Cancel at the Door. 2 points will be assessed.

Policy

After a no-show, late cancel, cancel-at-the-door, it will be the passenger's responsibility to call Proline and reschedule any subsequent trips for that day.

SARTA has established an administrative process to suspend, for a reasonable period of time, the provision of complementary paratransit service to ADA eligible individuals who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips.

- (1) Trips missed by the individual for reasons beyond his or her control (including, but not limited to, trips which are missed due to Operator error) shall not be a basis for determining that such a pattern or practice exists.
- (2) Before suspending service, SARTA shall take the following steps:
 - (i) Notify the individual in writing that SARTA proposes to suspend service, citing, with specificity, the basis of the proposed suspension and setting forth the proposed sanction.
 - (ii) Provide the individual an opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments;
 - (iii) Provide the individual with written notification of the decision and the reasons for it.
- (3) The appeals process outlined in Section H of this Policy is available to an individual on whom sanctions have been imposed under the "No-Show/Late Cancel" of this Policy.

The sanction is stayed pending the outcome of the appeal.

Proline ADA passengers who have been using SARTA's Proline service for less than 60 days will be offered travel training in place of a suspension. Successful completion of the travel training will clear all infractions (points) from a new passenger's record.

Schedule for penalties will be based on points assessed during the most recent 180 days:

- Two Points & 2% of Total Ridership – Educational Letter 1
- Four Points & 4% of Total Ridership – Educational Letter 2
- Seven Points & 7% of Total Ridership – Warning Letter
- Ten Points & 10% of Total Ridership – 5 Consecutive Day Suspension
- Twelve Points & 11% of Total Ridership – 10 Consecutive Day Suspension
- Fourteen Points & 12% of Total Ridership – 20 Consecutive Day Suspension
- Sixteen Points & 13% of Total Ridership – 30 Consecutive Day Suspension

H. Appeal Process

If a passenger wishes to dispute a penalty he/she may contact the Proline & Customer Service Assistant Supervisor by mailing the Appeal Form or by calling 330-477-2782 (ext. 539) within seven (7) calendar days of the date on the letter of notification. An administrative review will be provided for clients that wish to dispute the No Shows, Late Cancels and/or Cancels at the Door recorded or to offer reasons that the missed trips were due to a reason beyond the passenger's control.

Any penalties not overturned during administrative review may result in a suspension or warning letter. The passenger may schedule an appeal hearing by contacting the Proline & Customer Service Assistant Supervisor (330-477-2782 ext. 539). Appeal hearings will be held within 21 days of the date on the letter of notification.

Appeal hearings will be held with 3 SARTA Representatives (not Proline staff). The passenger may bring a case worker, social worker or advocate of their choice to present their information and arguments. If necessary, SARTA Proline will provide transportation to this formal hearing free of charge.

Appeal hearings will be held on Wednesday or Friday between 12 p.m. and 3 p.m.

A determination will be made within seven (7) calendar days of the hearing date and mailed to the passenger. While the appeal is being reviewed, the applicant will continue to receive services, pending the results of the review.

Suspensions that are upheld or not contested will begin 23 days after the date on the letter of notification.

In event of holiday or extenuating circumstance, a sanction may be stayed pending the outcome of the appeal hearing.

I. Arrival Window Time

Passengers are required to be ready for departure at the beginning and throughout their 30 minute pick up window. If the passenger is not ready the "Wait Time Policy" would take effect. If the passenger does not utilize the scheduled ride the "No-show Policy" would take effect. From time to time an Operator may arrive prior to the start of the passenger pick-up window. Passengers are not required to come out for their scheduled ride until the start of their pick-up window, but may do so if they so choose.

J. Wait Time Policy

Passengers are expected to be ready and waiting for their ride at the front door of their house or in the lobby of a complex, apartment building or office, or some other place with a clear view of where the SARTA bus will arrive.

Operators are required to wait only five (5) minutes for a passenger after arrival that is within or after the 30-minute pick-up window. The "No-Show Policy" would take effect if the passenger does not utilize the scheduled ride when the Operator arrives within the Arrival Window Time. The "No-Show Policy" would not take effect when an Operator arrives after the Arrival Window Time. However, if the passenger does not properly notify SARTA of his/her intent to utilize any scheduled rides for the remainder of that day all subsequent rides will be cancelled.

K. On-board Travel Time

While Proline is a "shared ride" service, SARTA has a travel time standard that no ADA passenger is on a vehicle for longer than it takes to ride the comparable fixed route. SARTA will monitor trip times to ensure that the duration of an ADA trip is not excessively longer than the fixed route trip it mirrors. For non-ADA trips, on-board travel time should be no longer than 2 hours from origin to destination.

SARTA makes an effort to have passengers on the bus less than 90 minutes.

L. Passenger Assistance

At no time shall the Operator enter a residence. Upon request, Operators are to assist with elderly and disabled passengers to and from public facilities, provided they can maintain visual contact of their vehicle.

M. Bags/Items Policy

Passengers may have 4 large or 8 small bags per trip, per passenger. Assistance with bags is only given by the Operator to safely stow the bags. A bag is defined as 1 large paper or plastic sack (weight not to exceed 10 lbs.) or 2 small plastic bags (weight not to exceed 5 lbs. each). (Any item meeting the preceding requirements may be substituted for a "bag".) Passengers may have 2 baskets of laundry, but the laundry must be completely covered. Any passenger violating this Policy will be given one (1) letter of warning. A second occurrence will result in a 30-day suspension of service.

N. On-time Performance

Trips are considered on time when the vehicle arrives within the 30 minute pickup window time agreed to with the rider at the time of making the reservation. SARTA has performance targets that at least 90 percent of trips each month will be within the pickup window. SARTA will monitor drop-off times for trips that have specific appointment times for quality assurance purposes.

O. Seatbelts

All passengers shall use a lap belt/shoulder harness if one is available. If the passenger refuses to allow, the lap strap/shoulder harness, the Operator will inform the passenger that it is SARTA's Policy to wear one if available. If the passenger still refuses the lap belt/shoulder harness then the Operator must will then immediately notify Dispatch prior

to departure of the refusal and include the client name and client number. For securement of persons utilizing a mobility devices, see section S.

P. Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) and Companions

ADA defines a PCA as someone who provides assistance in activities of daily living for the passenger that he or she is unable to provide for him or herself. One (1) PCA must be allowed to ride at no charge per ADA law. One other individual in addition to the PCA shall be allowed to ride to accompany the ADA paratransit eligible individual, but must pay the appropriate fare.

Additional individuals accompanying the ADA paratransit eligible individual shall be provided service at the current rate of the passenger fare provided that space is available for them on the paratransit vehicle carrying the ADA paratransit eligible individual and that transportation of the additional individuals will not result in a denial of service to ADA paratransit eligible individuals. This companion must be made known to the Reservationist at the time the request for transportation is made. SARTA reserves the right to institute the Non-ADA fare charge for individuals that are Non-ADA passengers.

Q. Service Animals

Proline vehicles will allow service animals to board their vehicles according to the ADA law. The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform for him or her. "Seeing eye dogs" are one type of service animal, used by some individuals who are visually impaired.

The care or supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of his or her owner. The passenger and the service animal may be asked to exit the vehicle if the service animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

R. Unattended Customer Policy

Customers determined as unable to be left unattended (based on age, cognitive limitations or special request of the responsible party) may schedule rides and ride unattended; however, arrangements must be made to have a responsible party meet the Paratransit vehicle at each location. A customer or their legal guardian must submit a request for a passenger to be determined as unable to be left unattended.

The driver will only wait five minutes for the responsible party to meet the Paratransit vehicle. If no one arrives, the driver will notify SARTA and continue on their route. SARTA will attempt to reach the designated emergency contact person. If the customer is not met by the end of the route, they will be returned to the bus garage. The customer will not be left unattended and the police will be notified to assist in locating a responsible party. Customers who must continue on a route beyond their scheduled destination may be subject to suspension of services. To submit a request, please call SARTA Proline at 330-455-2292.

S. Mobility Devices

*See section X. Application and Reapplication for additional information.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discriminating against individuals with disabilities in providing transportation services. All "common wheelchairs" and their

users must be transported. A "common wheelchair" is defined by the ADA as a mobility device (including three-wheeled scooters), which safely fits on a standard passenger lift, has maximum dimensions of 30" by 48" and a maximum combined weight of 800 pounds of both passenger and common wheelchair.

Operators must require that a passenger permit his/her common wheelchair to be secured, if the common wheelchair can be properly secured. If the bus securement system cannot be used properly on a particular common wheelchair, Operators must use their "best efforts" to restrain or confine the common wheelchair to the securement area and advise the common wheelchair passenger of a potential hazard. Operators may not deny transportation to common wheelchair users because his/her common wheelchair cannot be secured satisfactorily by the bus securement system.

Operators are to inform the passenger that they are going to put on the lap belt/shoulder harness. If the passenger refuses the lap strap/shoulder harness while the Operator is putting it on or after it is already on, then the Operator will inform the passenger that it is SARTA's Policy to wear one. If the passenger still refuses the lap belt/shoulder harness, the Operator will then immediately notify Dispatch prior to departure of the refusal and include the client name and client number. While the Operator may recommend that passengers transfer to a bus seat if the person is willing and able to do so, the passenger is not required to transfer.

Passengers using a mobility device that is not a "common wheelchair" may be denied transport by SARTA vehicles.

Operators are not permitted to drive or operate a motorized mobility device. Operation of the device is the sole responsibility of the passenger or their designee.

If a passenger cannot operate his or her motorized mobility device (or does not have a PCA to do so), transport may be denied on SARTA vehicles.

T. Mobility Devices, Ramps, Curbs & Steps

The passenger should meet the Operator at the closest accessible area to the SARTA vehicle. The area where being picked up must be cleared of ice, snow and/or debris and properly maintained to allow a safe area for the Operator to assist. If the area is deemed unsafe, assistance for the passenger will not be given and transportation will be denied for that trip.

U. Inclement Weather

Inclement weather (including but not limited to snow, ice, sleet, torrential rain, high winds) may result in the Proline system operating behind schedule.

V. Weapons & Contraband

Unauthorized weapons and contraband--concealed or otherwise--are prohibited on SARTA vehicles. Those caught with weapons or contraband will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

W. Abusive & Disruptive Behavior

Abusive or disruptive behavior of any type, directed towards SARTA employees or passengers, will not be tolerated. Instances of abuse or a disruption of service will be thoroughly investigated on a case-by-case basis. The severity of the instance will determine the penalty and may range from a letter of warning to criminal prosecution.

SARTA Proline reserves the right to suspend and/or revoke transportation privileges in cases of abusive behavior when the safety and well-being of the employees and/or passengers is compromised or when the behavior results in a disruption of SARTA's operations.

X. Application & Reapplication

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant, or responsible party representing the applicant, to apply or reapply for Proline/ADA privileges in a sufficient amount of time to complete the application process. Reapplications will be accepted 90 days prior to expiration date. Please, remember to allow 30 to 60 days for processing to avoid disruption of service. All forms and assessments must be completed fully. Expiration dates are clearly noted on Eligibility Letters.

As part of our standard application procedure all clients using a mobility device must have the mobility device assessed by SARTA for transportation. All assessments will take place at the SARTA main office 1600 Gateway Blvd SE, Canton, OH 44707. Appointments will be scheduled as part of the application process. The assessment will consist of measurements (length, width, and weight) of the mobility device with the occupant and time with an outreach specialist. Transportation will be provided free of charge to and from the assessment. If a new Mobility Device is acquired, an assessment of the new device is required.

Y. Established Process For Determining ADA Paratransit Eligibility

- 1) The process shall strictly limit ADA paratransit eligibility to individuals specified in ADA section 37.123.
- 2) All information about the process, materials necessary to apply for eligibility, and notices and determinations concerning eligibility shall be made available in accessible formats, upon request.* (See section: Functional Ability Assessments below.)
- 3) If, by a date 21 days following the submission of a complete application, SARTA has not made a determination of eligibility, the applicant shall be treated as eligible and provided service until and unless the authority denies the application.
- 4) SARTA's determination concerning eligibility shall be in writing. If the determination is that the individual is ineligible, the determination shall state the reasons for the finding.
- 5) SARTA shall provide documentation to each eligible individual stating that he or she is ADA Paratransit Eligible. The documentation shall include the name of the eligible individual, the name of the transit provider, and the telephone number of SARTA's paratransit coordinator, an expiration date for eligibility, and any conditions or limitations on the individual's eligibility including the use of a personal care attendant.
- 6) SARTA may require recertification of the eligibility of ADA paratransit eligible individuals at reasonable intervals.
- 7) A passenger may appeal eligibility denials. If a passenger wishes to dispute a denial he/she may contact the Proline & Customer Service Supervisor by calling 330-477-2782 within five (5) days of the date on the letter of notification. The formal written appeal must be received by SARTA within 10 business days of the date on the letter

of notification or your appeal will not be considered.

You must choose one of the following ways to send the appeal request: mail, in person at the SARTA main office located at 1600 Gateway Blvd. SE, Canton, OH 44707, or by visiting our website and completing the appeal form. If you would like to ask for an appeal, please read, sign, and date and fill in your phone number on the appeal request form that will be included in the decision letter regarding your eligibility status.

If you would like to designate an authorized representative to act on your behalf you will need to complete the Authorized Representative section of the Appeal Request including the full name, address, phone number, and relationship to you.

The process shall include an opportunity to be heard by three (3) SARTA Proline Representatives and two (2) outside independent citizens to present your information and arguments.

A determination will be made within seven (7) calendar days of the hearing date and mailed to the address provided on the Appeal Request.

SARTA is not required to provide paratransit service to the individual pending the determination on appeal. However, if SARTA has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, SARTA shall provide paratransit service from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

- 8) In applications for ADA paratransit eligibility, the authority may require the applicant to indicate whether or not he or she travels with a personal care attendant.

Z. Reasonable Modifications

In determining whether to grant a requested modification, the Stark County Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) will be guided by the provisions of the United States Department of Transportation regulations and guidance provided in Appendix E of Title 49 CFR Part 37.

Requests for reasonable modifications will be considered as follows:

- 1) A passenger requesting a reasonable modification will be required to describe what the passenger believes is needed in order to use SARTA's transportation service(s). The passenger is not required to use the term "reasonable modification" when making a request. The request for modification can be for any of the transportation services provided by SARTA.
- 2) The reasonable modification policy applies to individuals who are disabled under the ADA.

- 3) SARTA has designated the following individual to be responsible for handling requests for modification and procedures pertaining to the appeals of such decisions:

Civil Rights Manager
1600 Gateway Blvd SE
Canton, OH 44707
330-477-2782
adacomplaint@sartaonline.com

- 4) Whenever possible, the passenger should make requests for modification and allow SARTA an opportunity to determine whether the request will be granted in advance. Requests do not need to be in writing.
- a. Requests made during the ADA eligibility process.
 - i. Requests made through eligibility will have determinations processed along with the eligibility determinations within 21 days for new applicants and with the renewal determination for requests made during the recertification process.
 - b. Requests may be made by calling customer service at 330-455-2292.
 - i. Designated SARTA staff will make such determination within 7 business days.
 - c. Requests may be made by completing the Request for Reasonable Modification Form available for download on the website or by request.
 - i. Designated SARTA staff will make such determination within 7 business days.
- 5) When requests for reasonable modification cannot be practicably made and determined in advance, a SARTA staff member will make a timely determination so long as such actions do not result in a direct threat or fundamental alteration of services.
- 6) If the request occurs at the time of service, SARTA and/or a staff member may make a determination. Such determinations are made on a non-precedent setting basis based upon the facts and circumstances unique to that request.
- 7) Requests for modifications of policies and practices can be denied due to one or more of the following reasons:
- a. Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the transportation services, programs or activities;
 - b. Granting the request would create a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
 - c. Without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use the services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose;
 - d. Request creates an undue financial and administrative burden.
- 8) If an initial request for modification is denied, SARTA will to the fullest extent possible, take any other actions and/or find a suitable alternative to ensure that the passenger with a disability receives the services provided.
- 9) If a request for reasonable modification is denied, the passenger may file an appeal. SARTA has established a process for investigating and resolving appeals. A form is

available on our website or by request and includes the procedures by which SARTA processes and responds to appeals.

- a. Upon receipt, all appeals will be date-stamped and referenced to the Civil Rights Manager for review and consideration. The Civil Rights Manager may choose to:
 - i. Affirm the determination;
 - ii. Reverse the determination;
 - iii. Authorize a specific trip request that was denied;
 - iv. Refer the appellant for in-person assessment by a consultant;
 - v. Schedule the matter for a hearing; or
 - vi. Cancel or modify the provision of service.

- b. Within 10 days after receipt of the appeal, a letter will be sent to the passenger that includes the following:
 - i. Acknowledgement that the appeal has been received;
 - ii. The date by which a response will be sent to the passenger;
 - iii. Whom to contact if the passenger does not receive a response by that date; and
 - iv. If a hearing is requested by the passenger, the date, time and location of the hearing.

- c. The designated staff member will investigate the appeal and respond with a decision in writing within a reasonable time, not to exceed 30 days from receipt of the appeal (or 30 days from the date of the hearing if one is requested).

* This policy may be periodically updated. The most up-to-date policy may be found online at www.sartaonline.com or may be mailed upon request. The Policy stated above will be followed by all services provided by the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority's Proline Department including, but not limited to all contracted services unless stated otherwise in those contracts. SARTA reserves the rights to alter, add to, or delete from this policy in order to comply with ADA, federal, state, local or company guidelines at will.