

# star HANDBOOK

CAPITAL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



CDTA





# Welcome To



The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) is dedicated to providing inclusive mobility services throughout the Capital Region, offering a variety of options in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition to fixed-route buses, CDTA offers STAR (Special Transit Available by Request), a paratransit, door-to-door service available by advance reservation for individuals with disabilities who cannot use accessible fixed-route buses.

STAR operates within 3/4 of a mile of CDTA fixed routes during the same days and hours; for example, if a route runs Monday through Friday from 6AM to 7PM, STAR is available during those times and within that proximity. As STAR mirrors the fixed-route service, trip requests cannot be accommodated if they originate or end beyond current route boundaries or operating hours. If a destination lies outside the fixed-route area, customers must arrange additional transportation at their own expense.

STAR is a shared-ride service, so riders may be picked up or dropped off alongside others. It provides door-to-door service, assisting passengers from their front door to the front door of their destination, though drivers are not permitted to enter any buildings or homes. The service is considered on-time if the vehicle arrives within 25 minutes of the scheduled pickup time.

Customers can also sign up for Trip Notifications to receive live updates on their vehicle's location. For more information, visit [www.cdta.org](http://www.cdta.org) or call CDTA's STAR Call Center at (518) 482-2022 (option #3), available daily from 9AM–6PM.



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# STAR ELIGIBILITY

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), STAR service provides transportation services for individuals who, because of their disability, are unable to travel on the fixed route public transit service operated by CDTA. This service is designed to provide those people with disabilities equal access to public transportation.

**Eligibility for STAR is strictly limited.** You may be eligible if, because of a disability:

1. You cannot independently travel to/from fixed route bus stops within the service area.
2. You could use an accessible fixed route vehicle, but the route that would be used is not accessible.
3. You cannot independently navigate the transit system even though you can physically board the bus.

Your STAR eligibility will fall within one of the four categories listed below:

## Unconditional Eligibility

If your disability prevents you from traveling on the fixed route, public transit service for all trips.

## Conditional Eligibility

If your disability prevents you from using regular CDTA buses for some trips, but not all, depending on your situation and how your disability affects you.

## Temporary Eligibility

Eligibility is granted for a specific period of time depending on the circumstances, nature, and length of the disability.

## Not Eligible

If you do not have a disability that prevents you from traveling on the fixed route public transit service or your disability is not to a degree that it prohibits you from traveling on the fixed route bus. Remember, your STAR certification is based solely on ADA eligibility regulations and guidelines.

## Incomplete Application

An application is considered incomplete if the required medical documentation has not been submitted and/or the in-person assessment has not been scheduled. According to FTA guidelines, you must complete both steps within 60 days of being notified. If you don't finish everything within that time, you will have to start over and reapply for STAR Paratransit services.

\*\*\* If a determination of eligibility has not been made within 21 days after the submission of an individual's completed eligibility application, the applicant will be treated as eligible and provided service until such time that they are determined ineligible. \*\*\*

**IMPORTANT: Customers who are deemed eligible for STAR must recertify when their eligibility expires. The maximum amount of time for eligibility is 3 years.**

You will receive a recertification letter in the mail 60 days before the expiration of your STAR certification. You may also print or fill out the STAR Application online at <https://www.cdt.org/forms/star-application>.



## VISITORS WITH A DISABILITY TO THE REGION

Once a customer is deemed eligible for STAR, they also become eligible for a visitor pass when traveling to other paratransit agencies throughout the United States. To request a visitor pass, customers must contact STAR's Intake Office and provide the date of travel and the fax number or email address of the paratransit agency they will be visiting.

Similarly, individuals visiting the Capital Region in Albany, NY may request a visitor pass from CDTA by showing proof of their current paratransit eligibility. Acceptable proof includes a valid paratransit ID card or official documentation from another transit agency confirming eligibility. Visitors may send their information to CDTA by fax at **518-437-8391** or by email at [applytostar@cdta.org](mailto:applytostar@cdta.org).

Once CDTA verifies eligibility, a visitor pass will be issued the same day or no later than the end of the next business day.

If a CDTA STAR customer needs CDTA to send proof of eligibility to another transit agency, please call **518-482-2022** and select **option #4**. Be sure to provide the receiving agency's fax number or email address.

## ORIENTATION FOR USING STAR

To help customers, personal care attendants, and mobility instructors become familiar with STAR service, you may call (518) 482-2022 and select option #4.

Orientation is available in person, over the phone, or can be accessed on our website at [www.cdta.org](http://www.cdta.org).

## COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS

CDTA aims to provide customers with the best possible service, and we want to hear about your travel experience with us. To share your comments, you can:

- Call our Customer Service Department at (518) 482-2022 (option 3), Monday through Sunday from 9 AM to 6 PM.
- Email us at [starreservations@cdta.org](mailto:starreservations@cdta.org), available 24 hours a day, Monday through Sunday. A STAR representative will return your call within one hour during regular STAR Call Center hours.
- Fax your comments to (518) 437-8391, available 24 hours a day, Monday through Sunday.



# BOOKING A RESERVATION

Reservations are required for all STAR trips. Reservations can be made up to 7 days in advance and no later than 4 pm the day before.

**For your convenience, reservations can be made in one of five ways**

## By Telephone

Call STAR at (518) 482-2022 and choose menu (option 3), Monday through Sunday from 9AM-6PM.

## By Email

Just email your trip request(s) to [starreservations@cdta.org](mailto:starreservations@cdta.org) Monday through Sunday – 24 hours per day. A STAR representative will call you within an hour of receiving an email trip request during regular STAR Call Center Hours.

## By Fax

Just fax your trip request(s) to (518) 437-8391 Monday through Sunday – 24 hours per day.

## Pass Web

Customers can book trips 24/7 online including trips the next day up until 4pm. Customers using this feature should log onto the CDTA website at <https://www.cdta.org/star-booking-online> .

## Pass IVR

CDTA's STAR Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system now allows customers to confirm, cancel, and schedule trips through our automated phone system. Call (518) 482-2022 (option 2) anytime Monday-Sunday.

All emails, faxes, or messages received **after 4:00 PM** will be confirmed on the next business day. Those received **before 4:00 PM** on the day prior to the requested trip will be answered in the order they were received.

If your requested time is not available, we will provide a trip option within one hour of the requested time. This adjusted pickup time is called a negotiated trip time, which means the transit agency offers a time as close as possible to your original request, usually within one hour before or after.

- **Example:** If you request a pickup time of 10:00 AM but that time is not available, STAR will offer you a pickup time within one hour of 10:00 AM. The system will look for any times available between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM.

## Reserving Your STAR Trip

**By appointment time** – This is the best way to make a reservation when you need to be somewhere at a certain time, even if it's not a doctor's appointment.

- **Example:** If your helper comes at 5:30 PM and you need to get there before they do, you should use this. It's also good for trips to work, doctor visits, or shopping when you need enough time to do what you have planned.

**By time of departure** –When you make a reservation this way, you get to pick the time you want to leave. Your arrival time might change because the bus may pick up or drop off other people along the way. Be

sure to tell the person taking your reservation if you cannot leave before a certain time, like if you finish work at 4:00 PM.

- **Example:** You want the bus to pick you up at 4:30 PM because you finish work then. When you call to book, tell the agent you cannot leave before 4:30 PM. The bus will try to pick you up around that time, but your arrival time might change depending on other people's trips.

**IMPORTANT: Please be advised that STAR will not change/modify any reserved trips on the day of service**

## **Information Needed for Your Reservation**

1. You must state your FULL NAME and STAR ID number when reserving a trip. A live Call Center representative will ask if you're paying with cash, or ticket, unless you are in the UA or STAR debit program.
2. The date of requested reservation.
3. The reservation appointment time (If there is one). This is the actual time that you need to arrive at your destination, for example a doctor's office for an appointment. Please remember to leave enough time to be able to get from your drop off location to the appointment location. If you are dropped off at the front door of a medical building, it may take you additional time to maneuver through the building to get to the actual office.
4. The address that you are going to along with the name of the location. For example, a reservation cannot be made for a trip to Dr. Jones' office without giving a complete address along with the name of the practice.
5. The complete address where you would like to be picked up along with information about the location. Is it a home or a business? Is there a specific door that you would like to be picked up at? Does it have any distinguishing features (color of house/building, etc)?
6. All phone numbers associated with the reservation. Your phone number, phone number for the location you are going to (if possible, Ex: Doctor's Office phone number)
7. Information about any mobility aides that you or anyone traveling with you will be using (wheelchair, walker etc.)
8. Will you be traveling with a Personal Care Attendant, children, service animal or others?
9. Will you need a return trip or is your reservation only for one way?

# SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

## Subscription & Repeat Trips

STAR offers a subscription service for trips that are repeated and consistent, so clients don't have to reserve the same trip repeatedly. When you set up a subscription trip, it will automatically be scheduled daily, weekly, or monthly without needing you to call each time.

Subscription trip times must be verified and confirmed regularly.

To qualify for this service, you must not be in violation of the No-Show Policy.

**Customers are responsible for telling CDTA if they need to change, update, or cancel any subscription trips they don't need.**

# CANCELLING A TRIP

## Canceling or Changing Trips

STAR representatives will work with you to get you where you want to go. Please help us provide the best service by informing us, in advance, of trip changes and the reason for cancellations.

To change a trip, please call a representative at (518) 482-2022 (option 3).

**Reminder: STAR will not change/modify any reserved trips on the day of service.**

To cancel a trip, please contact the STAR office at least 2 hours before the confirmed reserved pickup time. You may cancel a trip using the following options:

### **Less than 2 hours before pick-up**

You must speak with a representative directly to get a confirmation number; you may not use the automated phone system in this situation. A trip canceled within 2 hours of the confirmed reserved pick-up time is considered a Late Cancel and these can jeopardize STAR customer status.

Cancellations made at the door for an "on-time" pickup that is, when the vehicle arrives within the 25-minute pickup window, is considered a "Cancel at Door" and will be a violation against you the client.

- Cancellations made at the door on a "late" pickup, meaning outside the 25-minute pickup window, will not be considered a violation against you the client.

STAR service uses a 25-minute pickup window, meaning the vehicle may arrive up to 25 minutes after your scheduled pickup time and still be considered "on time."

- **Example:** If your pickup is scheduled for 10:00 AM, the vehicle can arrive anytime between 10:00 AM and 10:25 AM without being late. Arrivals after 10:25 AM are considered late.

## **NO SHOW/LATE CANCELLATION**

### **ADA Comparable Paratransit Service - No Show/Late Cancellation Policy**

To encourage responsible trip scheduling and paratransit use, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides that public transit systems establish and enforce a No-Show policy. STAR's ADA Paratransit Passenger No Show policy is part of an effort to bring our customers a more efficient paratransit service and to be current with Federal Transit Administration findings and best practices.

Sporadic customer no shows, late cancellations, in-route cancellations and cancellations at the door are an expected cost of doing business for a paratransit system. However, a pattern and practice of "No Shows", late cancellations and cancellations at the door adversely affect the efficiency and effectiveness of service and significantly add to the cost of providing ADA complementary paratransit service. No Shows and late cancellations result in wasted trips that could have been scheduled for use by other paratransit customers.

No Shows are recorded each time a paratransit customer makes a late cancellation, forgets to cancel, declines their trip at the door, or is not available for pick-up for their scheduled trip.

### **Excessive No Shows may result in suspensions of service.**

#### **Examples of Cancellations**

##### **1. No Show**

The vehicle arrives at the scheduled pick-up location within the 25-minute pick-up window and the driver cannot reasonably see the customer approaching the vehicle within 5 minutes.

##### **2. Cancel at the door**

This is a cancellation that is less than an hour before you scheduled pick up time.

##### **3. Cancel late**

This is a cancellation that is less than two hours from the trip pickup time.

##### **4. In-Route Cancel**

This is a cancellation while the vehicle is in route to your pickup destination.

In the event of a No-Show at the customer's home,

### **CDTA is not obligated to dispatch another vehicle to serve that trip.**

If the customer calls STAR to inform the representative that they are "stranded" away from home because of the No-Show, CDTA will dispatch a vehicle to bring that customer home, with the understanding that it will be on a first availability basis to pick-up that customer.

If a No-Show occurs during the first leg of a round-trip, or the first part of a multi-destination trip, the

remaining trips of the customer's itinerary **will not** be automatically cancelled.

**It is the customer's responsibility to inform STAR if they will be taking the remaining trip(s). If the customer is not taking these remaining trip(s), additional No-Shows will be charged to the customer unless they cancel the trips.**

- If a customer decides to take part of a scheduled trip that has multiple destinations, he or she must cancel all other parts of the trip or each trip not canceled will be considered a No-Show.
- When the ride is canceled due to inclement weather, you will not be charged for that cancellation.
- When canceling a trip less than 2 hours before pick-up, you must speak with a Call Center Representative directly.
- When there is good cause for canceling a STAR trip, you will not be charged a No Show. Make sure to let the representative know the reason for the late cancellation or no-show as soon as possible. Customers cannot be held responsible for No Shows beyond their control.
- If a customer has any combination of three (3) No Shows, Late Cancellations In-Route Cancellations or Cancels at the Door that exceed 10% of their scheduled trips within thirty (30) days without cause, a written warning and or suspension notice will be sent to the customer. You have the right to appeal the determination under the No-Show Policy.

### **No Shows beyond Passenger's Control**

Trips cancelled for reasons that are beyond the customer's control will not be considered No Shows. This includes missed trips resulting due to sudden illness, family or personal emergency, transit connection delay, appointment delay, extreme weather conditions, operator error, paratransit lateness, or other unforeseen reasons for which it is not possible to call STAR to cancel in time, or to take the trip as scheduled.

Although No Shows will not be issued for reasons beyond the customer's control, the customer should always make every effort to cancel scheduled trips in a timely manner. **It is the customer's responsibility to provide the reasoning for not canceling a trip earlier.** Contact should be made with STAR as soon as reasonably possible so that No Shows occurring beyond a customer's control can be excused. Lack of any contact will result in a No-Show record remaining intact and may lead to warnings/service suspensions detailed on the next page.

### **Suspension of Service**

Prior to suspension, the customer will receive written notice that STAR service will be suspended on a specific date. If the customer wishes to appeal the suspension (within 60 Days of written notice), STAR will continue to provide Paratransit service until the decision has been made.

### **Consequences for Pattern and Practice of No Shows and Violations of Customer Guidelines**

<b>1st Violation</b>	Letter of Warning mailed to customer
<b>2nd Violation</b>	7 Day suspension of STAR Service
<b>3rd Violation</b>	14 Day suspension of STAR Service
<b>4th Violation</b>	30 Day Suspension of STAR Service and Loss of Subscription Service

Table 1: No Show Violations

## Violation history covers a 12-month floating period

Loss of subscription service takes effect after four violations within a floating 12-month period and will not be restored until the customer has three consecutive months without any No-Shows, **or until their eligibility expiration date occurs, whichever comes first.**

## Appeals Process

An individual who wishes to appeal a decision for eligibility, warning letters, or service suspensions can do so by law either in person or in writing. The customer has sixty (60) days to submit a written appeal to the address below or may call (518) 482-2022 (option 5) and leave a message requesting an in-person appeal.

CDTA STAR Appeal Officer  
110 Watervliet Avenue  
Albany, New York 12206

Within thirty (30) days of the appeal, CDTA's decision shall be issued to the individual in the appropriate accessible format including reasons for the decision.

**Note:** During the appeal process, the individual (appellant) may choose someone to represent them. This representative does not need to be a lawyer and may include a human services professional or anyone the customer selects. The appellant may also request a hearing to present information, supporting documentation, and arguments in their favor. The written appeal must include all necessary details for CDTA to evaluate the case and may include relevant professional documentation. CDTA will provide the individual with any information or details needed to support their appeal. The CDTA Appeal Officer is responsible for reviewing and hearing all appeals related to the **denial of STAR service, limited eligibility, or suspension of STAR use**. If not satisfied with the appeal determination, a grievance procedure can be found at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/civil-rights-ada/file-complaint-fta>.

## STAR FARES

### Fare Pricing

The fare for each one-way STAR trip is currently \$2.50. PCA's ride is free of charge, while companions are charged the same fare as a STAR customer. Fares must be paid at the time of boarding for each trip. If a contracted service provider is picking you up, please pay the normal STAR fare to the driver.

## Payment Options

- Debit (Preferred Method)
- CASH with exact amount (Operators do NOT carry change)
- STAR Tickets
- UA Program

### STAR Debit

The easiest way to ride is by signing up for STAR Debit (prepaid fare program). STAR customers who participate in the STAR Debit program must deposit \$50.00 to activate an account. This can be paid by check, or money order (made out payable to CDTA Treasury Department) or you can pay over the phone using a credit or debit card. A minimum balance (after the original account set up) of \$25.00 is always required. CDTA will contact customers via mail when their debit account needs to be replenished. Please call (518) 482-2022 (Option 7) for information.

### Cash

You will need to have the exact amount as Operators cannot make change.

**Pre-Payment for future rides is NOT allowed.**

### STAR Tickets

- Online – at the [Navigator Website](#)
- CDTA Sales Office – 85 Watervliet Avenue, Albany, NY 12207; (518) 437-6876
- Saratoga Springs Train Station - 21 Station Lane, Saratoga Springs NY 12866; (518) 437-6877
- Market 32/Price Chopper Supermarkets – Please visit the customer service desk or call the store closest to you for more information.

### CDTA Navigator ID Card

All ADA paratransit-certified individuals may obtain a CDTA *Navigator* ID Card. While it is recommended, it is **not required**. To get a Navigator ID Card, customers must bring their **STAR approval letter** to one of CDTA's Half Fare ID sites.

If you plan to travel outside CDTA's service area, the CDTA *Navigator* ID Card allows you to reserve paratransit trips with transit agencies throughout the United States.

A CDTA *Navigator* ID Card allows customers to ride CDTA's accessible fixed route at half fare all day long, seven days a week. Please call (518) 482-8822 or visit [www.cdta.org/navigator](http://www.cdta.org/navigator) for more information.

### Failure-To-Pay Fare Policies

Failure to pay, whether using cash, tickets, or while on the Debit Program, will result in a suspension of service, in accordance with the Suspension of Service guidelines.



# STAR CUSTOMER GUIDELINES

STAR provides shared-ride, **door-to-door** transportation. Operators will meet customers at the **ground-level exterior door of the building**. If the building entrance is accessible only by stairs, the **bottom of the stairs is considered the functional “door” for the purposes of door-to-door service**. Customers should be ready at their scheduled pickup time and visible to the operator. Operators will identify themselves and announce the name(s) of the passenger(s) they are picking up. Every effort will be made to make your ride safe, comfortable, and pleasant. Customers may use electronic devices to listen to music, talk on the phone, or watch videos, but headphones **must be used** to avoid disturbing other passengers. **For safety, all customers must remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.**

**STAR customers are expected to always treat drivers and fellow passengers with respect and consideration. Unprofessional or inappropriate behavior toward operators or other riders may result in a suspension of riding privileges. For more information, please refer to the Suspension of Service section.**

## Wheelchair Securement

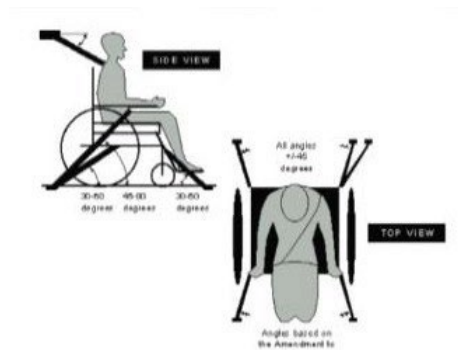


Image 1: Image Wheelchair Securement System

- STAR buses use a 4-point securement system for wheelchairs and scooters.
- All wheelchairs must be transported in a forward-facing position.
- Buses are equipped with lifts to assist customers with exiting and/or entering the vehicle.
- Buses are equipped with handrails to aid customers in entering and/or exiting the vehicle.
- Operators may offer verbal assistance or simple guiding of the hands.
- A seat belt is required for all STAR customers.
- Operators can assist in placing your walker or cane into the vehicle.
- Operators also will secure rollators, anything that can be secured while the bus is in motion.

It is the operator’s responsibility to ensure that all mobility devices are properly secured while inside the vehicle, whether the device is occupied or not. For your safety, please follow the instructions given by your operator.

Mobility devices must not move more than two inches while on the lift platform or in the securement area. Operators are instructed **not to transport** any devices that move more than two inches during these times.

## **Wheelchairs**

STAR vehicles are equipped with a lift to accommodate wheelchairs. Some oversized wheelchairs may exceed the lift capacity and cannot be accommodated. If you have concerns about your wheelchair's size or weight fitting on our vehicles, please contact the STAR office and we will make arrangements to have a supervisor inspect your wheelchair.

Customers must wait for the operator's instructions for boarding the lifts and positioning the wheelchair for proper securement in the vehicle. Please apply your brakes and turn off controls while riding on the lift and while the wheelchair is in a securement position.

## **Scooters**

Scooters are electrically powered devices with a central post supporting the seat. Some scooter manufacturers provide a written disclaimer to the owner that the device should not be used as a seat on a moving vehicle. You may ride your scooter on the lift. Please apply your brakes and turn off controls while riding on the lift and while the scooter is in the securement position. STAR strongly recommends you transfer to a fixed seat, but it is your choice. If you remain in the scooter while being transported, the driver will secure your scooter and assist you in securing your seat belt.

## **Other Devices**

Advancing technology has resulted in new and improved mobility devices continuously being developed. If you travel with a device or aid not listed here, please contact us. STAR will work with you to make your travel both pleasant and safe.

### **The following devices are NOT allowed to be used to transport STAR Customers.**

- Geri Chairs
- Stretchers
- Transport Chairs - We will transport individuals using transport chairs; however, for safety, the customer must transfer out of the transport chair and sit in a regular seat during the ride.

**PLEASE NOTE:** CDTA meets the ADA regulations regarding lift equipment for their paratransit vehicles. Due to vehicle constraints, we may not be able to accommodate a customer if the wheelchair or scooter is longer than 48" or wider than 32" or if the combined weight of the customer and wheelchair is more than 800 pounds. If you have any questions, please refer them to the STAR Intake department at 518-482-2022 option 4.

## **Portable Oxygen Use**

The ADA requires transportation service provided to customers who need to bring an oxygen tank. For safety reasons, it is required that the customer can **always maintain control of their oxygen tank.**

Oxygen tanks may be taken on a STAR vehicle; however, they cannot reduce seating capacity, nor can they create a safety hazard. Customers may travel with respirators, portable oxygen, and other life-support equipment, provided they do not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials.

Customers traveling with respirators, portable oxygen and other life-support equipment must follow safety procedures to ensure the protection of all passengers and transit employees.

- The portable oxygen tank may not exceed 15 lbs. in total weight; 29 inches in height; and 4.38 inches in diameter
- If the customer cannot pull an oxygen tank cart or carry/maintain control of the tank by themselves, then the rider shall provide a PCA to perform those functions.
- Portable oxygen tanks must be turned off when not in use; the oxygen mask/nasal cannula must be secured to the customer's face when in operation.
- The customer may board the vehicle with as many portable oxygen tanks as they or their PCA can carry themselves, provided all tanks carried by the passenger are under the passenger's/PCA's control.

## **Open Sores and Wounds**

For the safety of all passengers and CDTA employees, we cannot transport customers with open wounds or sores. An open sore or wound may include but is not limited to: a medically related opening which creates leaking or discharge of bodily fluid or an injury that causes an external break in body tissue. Wounds include abrasions, incisions, lacerations, punctures and avulsions.

Wounds must be properly dressed, and leakage/discharge must be controlled to prevent the transmission of biohazards to transit personnel and other customers, while also preventing infection of the wound. If the wound is not properly dressed, customers may be refused entry. In some cases, passengers may be required to exit the vehicle to address biohazard concerns.

**CDTA personnel are not allowed to assist passengers in dressing wounds and controlling bodily fluid leakage / discharge.**

## **Reasonable Assistance**

STAR operators will assist customers with boarding and exiting the vehicle and provide reasonable assistance to and from the first accessible exterior door of a building. If the building entrance is accessible only by stairs, the bottom of the stairs is considered the functional "door" for the purposes of door-to-door service. Operators are not required to lift mobility devices or become weight-bearing supports when assisting customers. Operators are not permitted to enter buildings but may hold the door open if needed to facilitate safe access. Reasonable assistance includes helping

customers navigate safe, accessible pathways up to the front entrance but does not extend to carrying customers or belongings inside or up steps.

Customers are responsible for carrying and safely securing their own packages. Packages should be manageable enough to fit on your lap or by your feet during the ride. If a package cannot be safely accommodated, the operator will contact STAR Dispatch for further guidance.

If you require additional help with bags, packages, or luggage, please bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or companion to assist you during your trip.

## Shopping Bags and Carts

To ensure the safety of all passengers and maintain enough space on STAR vehicles, the following rules apply when bringing bags or carts:

- Customers must be able to carry and properly secure their own bags or packages.
- All packages must fit on your lap or down by your feet. They cannot take up other seats or block the aisle.
- If your items cannot be safely secured, the operator will contact STAR Dispatch for instructions.
- **Example:** Customers are limited to 5–6 grocery bags, which must be secured within the seat they are sitting in. Shopping carts are allowed, but they must be secured in the proper area and cannot create a safety hazard or reduce passenger capacity. If a customer boards with a full shopping cart or more items than allowed, they will not be transported and must find alternate transportation home.

When making a reservation, please inform the representative if you plan to bring a cart.

## Travel Training

Travel Training is available for customers who need help learning how to use the CDTA transit system. This free program is led by professional instructors and is tailored to meet everyone's needs. With Travel Training, some customers with disabilities may be able to confidently use CDTA's accessible fixed-route buses.

**Please note:** If a customer successfully completes Travel Training and can ride fixed-route service independently in **normal weather conditions**, they may no longer be eligible for STAR service on that specific route. However, the **independence and flexibility** gained is often well worth it.

For more information or to enroll in Travel Training, please contact:

- **Schenectady and Rensselaer Counties:** (518) 344-2757
- **Albany and Saratoga Counties:** (518) 437-5292
- **Online:** [www.cdta.org/cdta-travel-training](http://www.cdta.org/cdta-travel-training)

**Please call customer service for more information at 518-482-8822.**

## Service Animals

A **service animal**, as defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is: "Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability."

This includes animals trained to guide individuals who are blind, alert those who are deaf, pull wheelchairs, assist during medical episodes, or perform other disability-related tasks. **Emotional support animals are not considered service animals under this definition.** Your **service animal is welcome** on STAR buses and vehicles.

When traveling with a Service Animal, please inform the STAR representative when scheduling your trip if you will be traveling with a service animal. This helps us make sure there's adequate space and that the operator is aware. You are responsible for the care, grooming, and behavior of your service animal at all times. A service animal may not occupy a seat, but may sit in your lap if appropriate. Larger animals should remain on the floor next to you and should not interact with other passengers unless given permission. The service animal must always be under your control—by leash, harness, voice command, or physical signal.

If you use a wheelchair lift, your service animal may ride on the lift with you. Alternatively, you may board the vehicle and call the animal to enter using the stairs.

Service animals are considered an extension of a person's disability and therefore are permitted to ride. This means there may be animal allergens present in the vehicle. **If you have allergies and choose to refuse a ride due to the presence of a service animal, CDTA is not obligated to provide an alternate trip.**

## A Word About Emotional Support or Comfort Animal

STAR does not transport Emotional Support or Comfort animals unless they are in a secure carrier. For safety reasons, customers **must be able** to carry and hold the carrier themselves during the trip.

Please remember that not all passengers are comfortable around animals, and some may have health conditions aggravated by fur, dander, or pet hair. To help us maintain a safe and respectful environment for all, if you plan to travel with a pet in a carrier, **you must inform the STAR representative at the time of your reservation.**

## Severe Weather Guidelines

In the event of snow or ice accumulation, CDTA follows specific safety procedures to ensure both customer and operator safety: If weather conditions or snow/ice accumulation prevent the safe use of the vehicle's lift, the operator will not attempt pickup. Instead, they will notify STAR Dispatch, and a representative will contact the customer to explain that the trip cannot be provided.

A supervisor will assess whether the trip can be accommodated from an alternate nearby location. If the lift can be safely deployed, but the sidewalk or driveway is unsafe due to snow or ice, the operator will contact dispatch.

The Transportation Dispatcher will attempt to notify the customer, and the pickup may be postponed until conditions improve. STAR will only pick up customers once the sidewalk or driveway is safely cleared and accessible for travel. If a customer's residence is blocked by snow or ice, STAR will make every reasonable effort to get the customer home safely, when possible.

## **Personal Care Attendants, Companions, and Children**

### **Personal Care Attendant**

An aide or Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone who provides essential assistance to a customer during the trip and at the destination. The PCA must board and exit the vehicle at the same location as the customer. A PCA traveling with a customer is not required to pay a fare. All eligible STAR customers are allowed to have a PCA accompany them, so please inform us if a PCA will be traveling with you when you make your reservation.

**Please note that children under the age of 12 are not permitted to serve as a PCA due to safety and service policies.**

PCAs are expected to assist customers in a manner that supports safe and efficient travel but must also adhere to CDTA's STAR Code of Conduct. This includes treating operators, staff, and other passengers with respect and refraining from any behavior that may be disruptive, threatening, or unsafe. Operators are responsible for providing reasonable assistance as defined by the ADA, but PCAs should be prepared to assist with any additional needs beyond this scope, including handling bags, mobility devices, or personal care tasks. Failure of a PCA to follow conduct guidelines may result in restrictions or suspension of travel privileges for the customer.

### **Companions/Children**

STAR customers may bring companions as described below:

**STAR allows up to 3 individuals to ride with you on a trip, space permitting.**

You may bring **1 companion** even if you travel with a PCA or aide. Additional companions beyond the first are only allowed if there is space available. STAR cannot displace other ADA paratransit eligible riders to make room for companions.

**If we cannot accommodate your companions, a STAR Supervisor will contact you the day before your trip.**

Your PCA or aide rides free of charge, but companions must pay the regular STAR fare. According to CDTA policy, up to **3 children under age 6** may ride free with you. Children under 5 must be secured in a car seat provided by STAR, or they will not be transported.

**It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or PCA to secure the child in the safety seat.**

Companions aged 6 and older pay the same fare as the customer and must use the vehicle's onboard safety lap belt. This policy is enforced at the fare box or designated area using a height measure of 46 inches (the average height of a 5-year-old child).

## Children

- An adult accompanying a child on a STAR vehicle is responsible for the child.
- Operators will not secure a child car seat and are not permitted to carry children or assist with strollers on or off the vehicle. Strollers must be properly folded and secured.
- It is the operator's responsibility to ensure that each child is properly secured once they have been placed in the vehicle by accompanying adult.
- Please advise the representative whether you will be bringing a stroller in the vehicle.

## Paratransit Eligible Children Policy

Children under five (5) years old may be considered for paratransit eligibility based on whether the child and the accompanying adult, working together as a team, are able to use fixed-route service. If a child is found eligible for STAR service and is under age 5, an adult Personal Care Attendant (PCA) must travel with the child. In this case, **the adult PCA rides are free, and the child must pay the regular STAR fare.**

When reserving a trip, please let the representative know that the child will be traveling with an adult PCA. It is the **operator's responsibility to ensure the child is properly secured** once they are placed in the vehicle by the adult.

Please advise the representative if the child is under the age of 5 and provide the **child's age, height, and weight** so we can ensure the correct car seat is available on the vehicle.

## PASS Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

**Note: You will need to opt-in to be able to book trips through the IVR by calling STAR Customer Service.**

CDTA's STAR Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system now allows customers to confirm, cancel, and schedule trips through our automated phone system. **Customers can log in using their client ID and 6-digit birthdate in the format of MM/DD/YY.**

**Please follow these steps to use the new STAR IVR features:**

1. Dial (518) 482-2022 to contact STAR
2. Select option 2 to connect to the STAR IVR
3. Log in using client ID and 6-digit birthdate in the format of mm/dd/yy.
4. Choose one of the following options:
  - PRESS 1 to confirm your trips
  - PRESS 2 to cancel a trip
  - PRESS 3 to schedule a new trip



## 5. Continue following the IVR Prompts

### **Some notes about scheduling trips through the IVR:**

- The addresses for pick-up or drop-offs will be pre-defined. These addresses include any addresses on file with STAR such as client home or client doctor. STAR can also include frequently used addresses to be made available through the IVR. If you would like other addresses added so that they are available through the IVR, please contact STAR to have your file updated.
- Any recently used addresses will also be available for pick-up or drop-off addresses.
- You can only schedule trips up to 7 days in advance and you cannot schedule same day trips.
- Next day trips can only be scheduled up until 4pm on the previous day.
- You are limited to scheduling three additional passengers per trip through the IVR. If you need to schedule more than three additional passengers, you will need to call STAR Customer Service at (518) 482-2022.

### **PASS Web System Notifications**

**NOTE: You will need to opt-in to receive notifications from STAR automatic notification system by calling Customer Service.**

Once you have opted in, you will be able to receive Direct Automated Notifications about your trips that can be sent via Phone, Email, and/or Text Message.

The following notifications are available:

- **Imminent Arrival:** You will receive notification 20 minutes prior to your vehicle arriving.
- **No Show:** You will receive notification if your trip has been marked as a No Show.
- **‘Reminder’ in Advance:** This will provide trip confirmation for the next day’s trips. These notifications will go out starting at 7:30pm on the day prior to your scheduled trip.
- **Trip Booking Confirmation:** You will receive confirmation whenever you book a trip.
- **Trip Cancel Confirmation:** You will receive confirmation whenever you cancel a trip.
- **Trip Update:** You will be notified anytime changes are made to your trip (Times, location)

Text ‘STAR’ for Trip Confirmations

Text 25370 with the subject of “STAR <CLIENTID>:<PASSWORD>” to receive a text about any upcoming trips you have booked for the next 3 days

## **Local Resources**

The following is a list of resources that may assist you with an appeal or STAR complaint/comment:

### **Belvedere Brain Injury Program**

1 Van Tromp Street  
Albany, New York 12207  
Phone: 518-694-9400  
Web: [www.belvedere-online.com](http://www.belvedere-online.com)

### **Capital District Coalition for Accessible Transportation**

15-17 3rd St.  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518-273-1110  
Web: [www.cdcat.org](http://www.cdcat.org)  
Email: [advocate@mobilityfreedom.org](mailto:advocate@mobilityfreedom.org)

### **Catholic Charities Disabilities Services**

1 Park Place, Suite 100  
Albany, New York 12205  
Phone: 518-783-1111  
Web: [www.ccdservices.org](http://www.ccdservices.org)

### **Capital District Center for Independence (CDCI)**

1716 Central Ave  
Albany, New York 12205  
Phone: 518-459-6422  
Web: [www.cdciweb.com](http://www.cdciweb.com)

### **Disability Advocates, Inc.**

Clinton Square, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Albany NY 12207  
Phone: 518-432-7862

### **Epilepsy Foundation Northeastern New York**

3 Washington Square  
Albany, NY, 12205  
Phone: 518-456-7501  
Web: [www.epilepsyfoundation.org/local/efneny/index.cfm](http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org/local/efneny/index.cfm)

### **Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley (ILCHV)**

15-17 3rd St.  
Troy, N.Y 12180  
Phone: 518-274-0701  
Web: [www.ilchv.org](http://www.ilchv.org)

### **North Eastern Association of the Blind (NABA)**

301 Washington Ave  
Albany NY 12206  
Phone: 518-463-1211  
<https://naba-vision.org>

### **Self-Advocacy Association of NYS**

500 Balltown Road Bldg. 12  
Schenectady, NY 12304  
Phone: 518-370-7370  
<https://sanys.org>

### **NYConnect**

Dial 211 for over the phone application assistance

## CDTA Online Resources

### STAR Handbook

<https://www.cdta.org/star-handbook-and-booking-guide>



*Image 2: STAR Handbook URL QR Code*

### STAR Service Area

<https://www.cdta.org/ada-map/>



*Image 3 : STAR Service Area URL QR Code*

### Web Booking

<https://www.cdta.org/star-online-booking>



*Image 4 : Web Booking URL QR Code*

# The STAR Traveler Program

The STAR Traveler program gives you the power to book and cancel your trips online or by phone, plus receive accurate, detailed notifications about your reservations.

With STAR Traveler, you get more ways to access information about your trips anytime, anywhere. You can see all the details of your account and upcoming trips, making it easier to plan your trip with **real-time updates on bus arrival times**.

CDTA is excited to offer this new service that lets you:

- Get up-to-the-minute information on the web and through our automated phone system (IVR).
- Connect quickly with a call center agent whenever you need help.

## Online Booking

Plan trips, check schedules, and get bus arrival predictions on any web-enabled device, whether it's a PC, smartphone, or tablet.

## Automated Telephone Solutions

Use our enhanced interactive voice response (IVR) system to get transit information by phone anytime, 24 hours a day.

## Real Time Information

Know exactly when your bus will arrive, whether you're at the stop, browsing online, or using your phone.

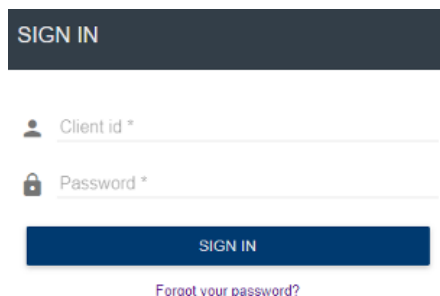
## Customer Experience

STAR Traveler's web and phone services give you 24/7 access to up-to-date information, helping CDTA provide the best service possible.

## Online Booking – Pass Web Guide

Customers can book trips 24/7 online including trips the next day up until 4pm. Customers looking to use this new feature should log onto the CDTA website at <https://www.cdt.org/star-booking-online> or <https://starbooking.cdt.org>.

### How to Login

The login screen features a dark blue header with the text "SIGN IN" in white. Below the header are two input fields: "Client id \*" with a person icon and "Password \*" with a lock icon. A dark blue "SIGN IN" button is positioned below the password field. At the bottom, there is a link that says "Forgot your password?".

SIGN IN

Client id \*

Password \*

SIGN IN

[Forgot your password?](#)

Image 5 : STAR Online Booking - Login Screen

**Step 1:** Enter your Client ID Number in the Client ID Box

**Step 2:** Enter your 6-digit Password in the Password Box (MM/DD/YY)

**Step 3:** Click the Sign-In Button

### Menu Options (left hand side)

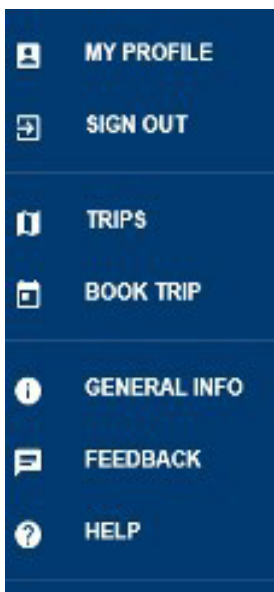


Image 6 : STAR Online Booking - Menu Options

- **My Profile** – Review your profile information, includes Eligibility End Date.
- **Sign Out** – Logs you out of the site.
- **Trips** – View already booked trips in a calendar format.
- **Book Trip** – This is where you will create a new booking.

- **General Info** – This is where you can get information on STAR service.
- **Feedback** – This form is to provide general feedback to STAR and is not intended for trip planning or address changes.
- **Help** – Provides customers with definitions for commonly used terms.
- **Recertification** – Provides customers with a link to fill out a STAR Application online.

## Monthly Trip Details (main screen)

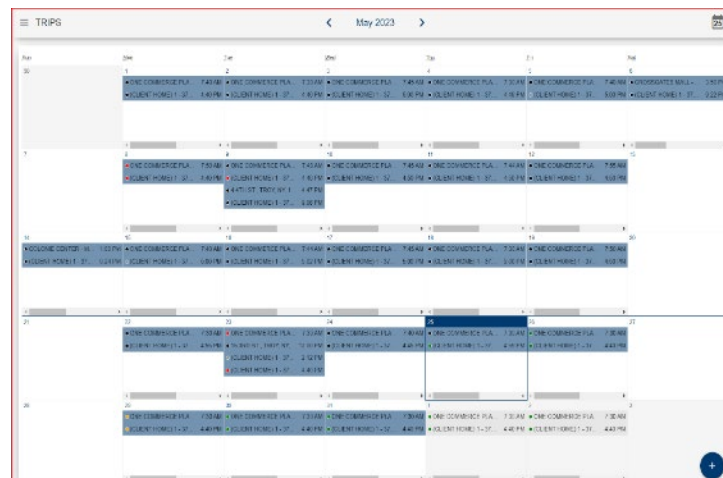


Image 7: STAR Online Booking - Monthly Trip Details

## BOOKING A TRIP

**Step 1:** Click **Book Trip** from the Menu

**Step 2:** If you want to book a trip that you have recently taken, you can select the address from the drop-down menu under **Book Again**



Image 8 :STAR Online Booking - Book Again Drop-Down Menu Option

- Click on one of the options presented as seen below and then select it.





Image 9 : STAR Online Booking - Example Options of Trips to Book Again

**Step 3:** If you do not select from the **Book Again** option, you must select your pickup address under **Pickup Details**. You can either click the **Pickup Address** box and select an option from the drop- down menu or type in the pickup address manually.



Image 10 : STAR Online Booking - Pickup Details Address

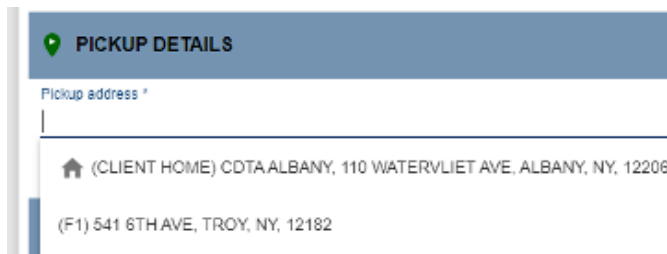


Image 11 : STAR Online Booking - Select from existing Pickup Addresses or Type Address Manually

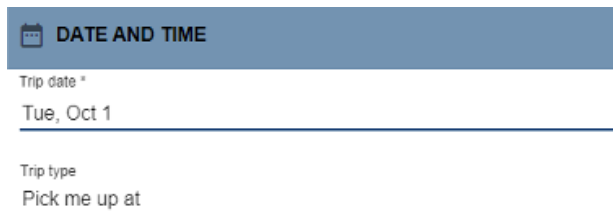
**Step 4:** Under **Drop Off Details** you must enter your destination address. You can either click the **Drop Off Address** box and select an option from the drop-down menu or type the drop off address manually.



Image 12 : STAR Online Booking - Dropoff Details Address

**Step 5:** Click on the **Trip Date** box and select the date of travel from the drop-down list. **You cannot book the same day trips online as the current date will not be available.**

- a. Select **Pick me up at** for **Trip type** if you do not have an appointment time. Select Drop me off at if you have a specific time



**DATE AND TIME**

Trip date \*

Tue, Oct 1

Trip type

Pick me up at

Image 13 : STAR Online Booking - Select Pick me up at if you do not have a specific appointment time you need to arrive by

- b. Select **Drop me off at** for **Trip type** if you do have an appointment time. Then enter the time of your appointment under the **Pick a time** drop-down menu.



**DATE AND TIME**

Trip date \*

Tue, Oct 1

Trip type

Drop me off at

Image 14 : STAR Online Booking - Select Drop me off at if you do have a specific appointment time you need to arrive by

**Please note, your scheduled time already includes a 25-minute pick up window grace period.**

**Step 6:** Select the trip purpose by selecting from the **Booking Purpose** menu

Booking purpose \*

Image 15 : STAR Online Booking - Select Booking Purpose

**Step 7:** Select **Trip Options**. If you are shopping and bringing a shopping cart, select **Shopping Cart** under the option **I will be bringing**

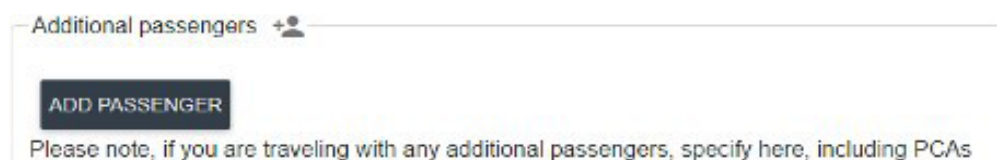


I will be bringing

SHOPPING CART

Image 16 : STAR Online Booking - Trip Options - Shopping Cart Option Shown

**Step 8:** If you are traveling with any additional passengers select the Add Passenger button. **If you are riding with a PCA you will need to add them as an additional passenger here.**



Additional passengers +

ADD PASSENGER

Please note, if you are traveling with any additional passengers, specify here, including PCAs

Image 17 : STAR Online Booking - Add Passengers button

**Step 9:** Select the **type of passenger** and the **type of space** they will need from the **Add Passenger** pop-up. Click **Add Passenger** button.

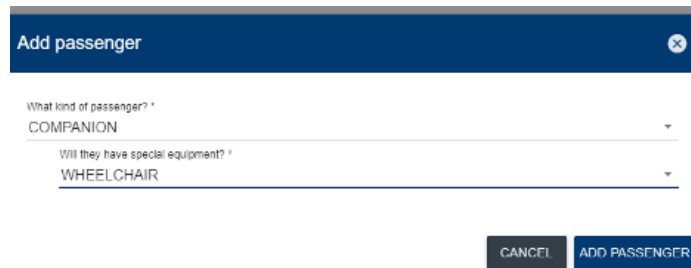


Image 18 : STAR Online Booking - Add Passenger Popup Window, select passenger type and special equipment

**Step 10:** Then Click **Book Trip**.

**Step 11:** On the **Confirm Booking** screen, please verify that all your information under **Trip Details** is correct. A message box will appear to provide your scheduled trip information. Click on the **CONFIRM BOOKING** button to accept the trip times. You can modify your trip times by selecting **LEAVE EARLIER** or **LEAVE LATER** You must click on the **CONFIRM BOOKING** button when completed.

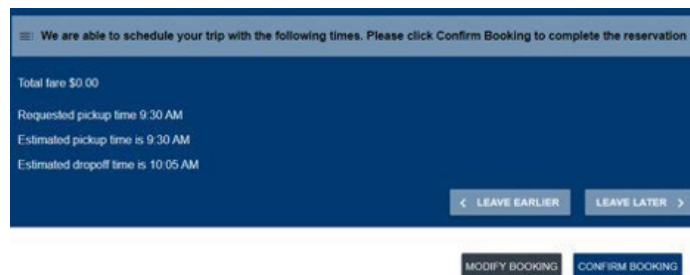


Image 19 : STAR Online Booking - Confirm Booking - Review Trip Details

**Step 12:** After you click **CONFIRM BOOKING** button, the **Booking Confirmation** box will appear to confirm if your trip is booked and scheduled successfully. Please **copy down the confirmation ID** as it can be used when speaking with a representative about the trip.

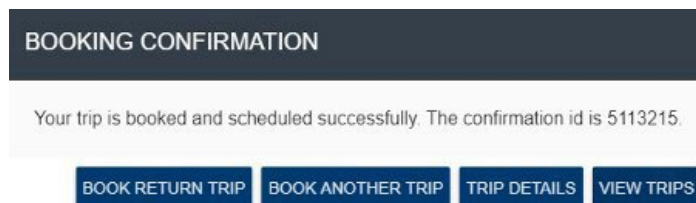


Image 20 : STAR Online Booking - Booking Confirmation

**Step 13:** From here you can select **Book Return** trip to book this trip in reverse. Once you click the Book Return Trip button you will just need to enter the **Pickup or Drop off times**.

**NOTE: You can also book this trip again at a different time by selecting the Repeat button**

## TRIP DETAILS

Under the STAR booking home page you will be able to get the most up to date live information. Click on **Trip Details**, which will show estimated time of arrival based on real time data. In this screenshot, you can see your ride arrive in 9 minutes. As the vehicle gets closer to your pickup location, it will continue to count down street by street and turn by turn and minute by minute.

### Example

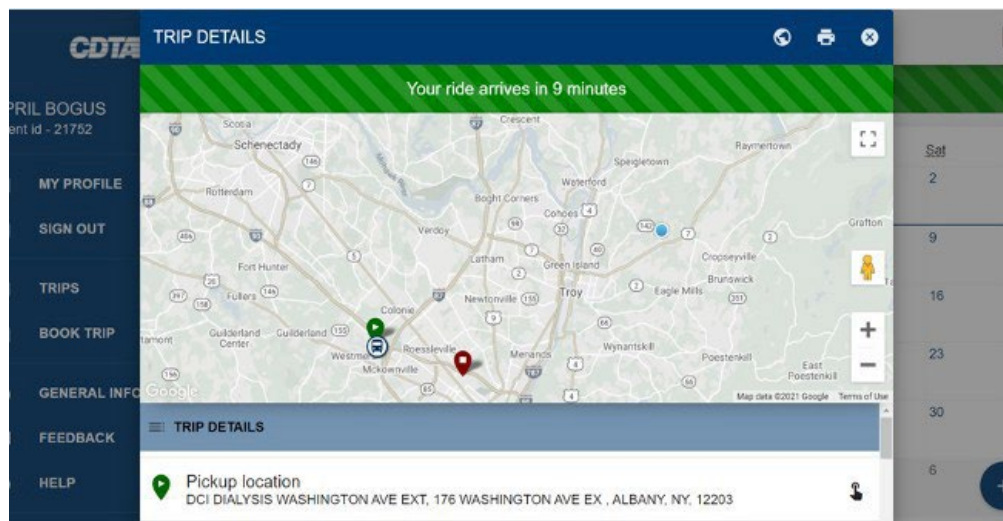


Image 21 : STAR Online Booking - Trip Details Live Location - Shows 9 Minute Arrival Time

The green arrow is the pickup location, the bus icon is the vehicle headed to you, and the maroon balloon icon is the scheduled destination for this trip.

The bottom of the page gives you the address of the pick-up location and the drop off location.

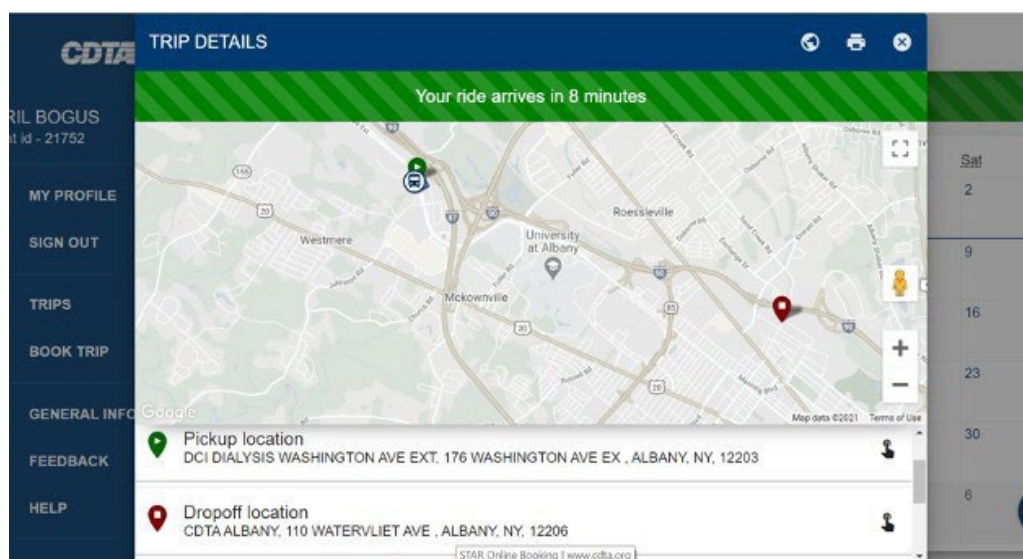


Image 22 : STAR Online Booking - Trip Details - Pickup and Dropoff Location Specified

On the right you will see a little yellow Pegman; he can be moved onto the map to enable street view. You

can access street view by dragging the yellow man to a destination on the map; of either your pickup location or the destination.

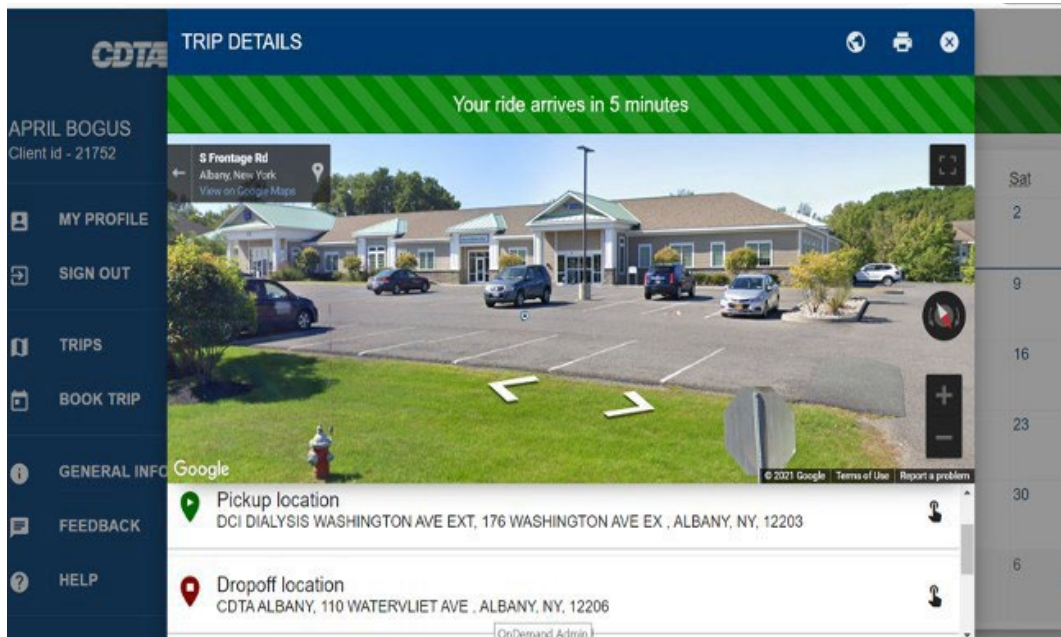


Image 23 : STAR Online Booking - Trip Details - Street View Enabled

Once the vehicle arrives, you will see ride information including the drivers' badge number and vehicle number.

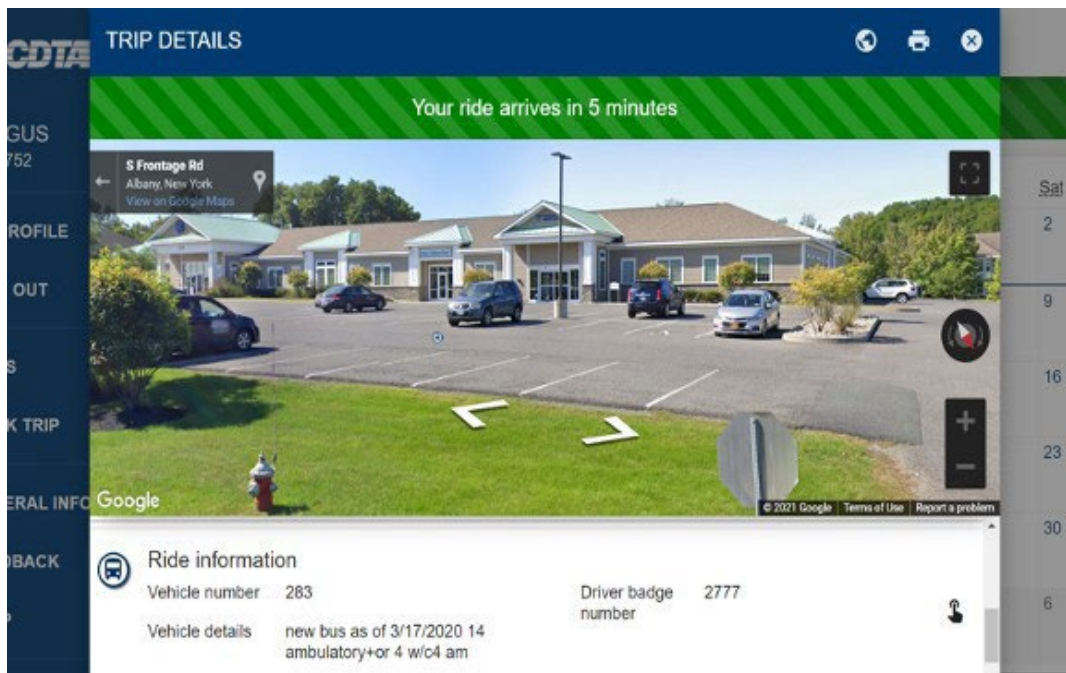


Image 24 : STAR Online Booking - Trip Details - Ride Information Details



## CANCELLING A TRIP

**Step 1:** Select the **trip** from the **Calendar**. Then click the **Trips** link on the left side of the page.

**Step 2:** From the **Trip Details** page, click the **Cancel** button.



Image 25 : STAR Online Booking - Cancel Trip - View Trip Details and Cancel

**Step 3:** Enter a **Cancellation Reason** and then click **Yes** button:

Image 26 : STAR Online Booking - Cancel Trip - Cancellation Reason and Confirmation

**Step 4:** Be sure to cancel the return trip booking associated with this booking as well or this may create a no-show or cancel-at- door situation.

**Step 5:** Please note the **Cancel Confirmation Number**



Image 27 : STAR Online Booking - Note the Cancel Confirmation Number



CAPITAL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

110 WATERVLIET AVENUE, ALBANY, NY 12206  
(518) 482-8822 | [CDTA.ORG](http://CDTA.ORG)