

Frequently Asked Questions about the Dial-A-Ride Transportation Services (DARTS) Program

DART Operations- Service Hours, Pick-Ups, Scheduling Rides, Groups

Is the DARTS Program currently operational?

Yes, the program started on a limited basis on October 4, 2010.

What are the service hours of operation? How early can an appointment be scheduled for? How late can a pick-up be scheduled for?

Hours of operation are currently 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday – Friday. Your pick-up time could be as early as 8:00 AM and our goal is to ensure that all passengers are home by 5:00 PM. Please make note that your appointment time should allow for a pick-up no earlier than 8:00 AM and should allow time to return home by 5:00 PM.



Does the DARTS Program operate on the weekends and/or in the evening?

DARTS is currently not operating on weekends. However, staff is evaluating the needs required to provide services on weekends in preparation of developing some special weekend destinations.

If you have scheduled your transportation in advance but need to reschedule for any reason, even if it is on the same day but at a different time, can you call and change it?

DARTS staff will make every reasonable effort to accommodate such changes in scheduling as long as other passengers are not negatively impacted by the change.

If a group of seniors (up to 5) are going to the same destination (i.e. energy assistance program at library or paying bills) can they all be picked-up at one senior's home address if they are all in the program?

The target population of the DARTS program is isolated seniors with limited access to transportation. It is the intent of the program to serve as many seniors in the target population as possible. If seniors are able to access transportation to a central location, such as another senior's home, their access to transportation would not qualify as limited. Therefore, the practice of picking up a group of seniors at a single location that is not their home for travel to the same destination would not meet the intent of the program.

How many times may a rider use the DARTS Program?

At this time no limits have been established; however, as ridership increases and the availability of space becomes an issue, staff will develop limitations that will increase accessibility to the maximum number of seniors.

Driver Services-Duties, Responsibilities, Transportation Locations and Destinations

What type of drivers and vehicles will be used in the DARTS Program? Will the drivers be uniformed?

Drivers for the DARTS program will have a valid Commercial Drivers License and experience in transporting passengers. Staff has developed a training program that includes the safe operation of the vehicles and the courteous service to our seniors. Drivers should be wearing a burgundy colored DARTS shirt.

Vehicles will be 10 to 12 passenger buses with wheelchair lifts that passengers will be able to board in an upright position (no bending over and maneuvering around seat belts).

Will the driver wait for the rider while they are at their appointment/trip destination or will the driver return at a designated time?

The driver should not be expected to wait while the rider is at their destination. In most cases the driver will have additional trips to make. When possible a designated return trip time will be established at the time the appointment is made; however, appointments that do not have a specific end time will require a call back to arrange for the return trip.

Will the drivers assist with carrying their packages?

Drivers will assist you with your packages from the door of your house or the store where you purchased them. They will assist you in securing them on the bus and they will also assist you from the bus to the door of your house. Please be advised that Drivers are not allowed to enter your house.

May the DARTS Program be used for transportation to the senior center?

No. Transportation to the Senior Centers is available through the Coordinated Transportation System.

Does the DARTS Program provide transportation out of the city limits?

The DARTS program provides transportation within the boundaries of Fulton County.

Does the DARTS Program provide transportation to doctor visits?

Currently, DARTS is concentrating on developing ridership to centralized locations that provide access to multiple goods and services. The DARTS program has been providing assistance with the existing system for medical trips on a "back-up" or "stand-by" basis.

Are riders able to be picked up at senior centers to go to their destinations?

No. Riders are pick-up at their home, transported to their destinations, and then, transported back to their home.

Eligibility- Registration, Requirements, Non-Eligible Passengers

Does one have to attend the senior center to be eligible for the DARTS Program?

No. During Phase I of the implementation of DARTS, participants of existing Fulton County Aging programs that meet the eligibility criteria are registered into the system through their Case Manager or Center Manager. Home-bound clients that do not attend a center may also be eligible.

Is the DARTS Program restricted to registered participants at the senior centers? Are volunteers at the centers eligible?

During Phase I of the implementation of DARTS participants of existing Fulton County Aging programs that meet the eligibility criteria are registered into the system through their Case Manager or Center Manager. Home-bound clients that do not attend a center may be eligible.

Volunteers at the centers should be registered participants in the Volunteer Services program and may be eligible, provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

Are senior high-rise residents eligible for the DARTS Program?

Yes, provided they meet all eligibility requirements. During Phase I they must be a participant of a Fulton County Aging Program

How does someone in a senior hi-rise apply for the DARTS program if they do not attend a senior center?

During Phase I of the implementation process, only current program participants (Case Management, Neighborhood Senior Centers, and Senior Multipurpose Facilities) are accepted into the program. Phase II is scheduled to begin within the first two months of 2011. At that time information will be provided for others to register for the program.



If a senior is not eligible for the program because they can not handle they own affairs can they be accompanied by an eligible senior that is in the program and will be responsible for them?

All seniors must meet the eligibility criteria based on their own individual status without the assistance from another eligible individual.

Can a senior's child or someone else accompany them on this transportation?

The current policy is that only registered participants that meet the eligibility criteria are transported.

Are seniors who own cars eligible for the DARTS Program?

Seniors may own a car and still be eligible for DARTS. In some cases seniors retain ownership to a car, but the car is driven by their children or other family members to provide some of their transportation needs. In this case, their access to transportation may still be limited, based upon the availability of the one driving the car. Additionally, a senior may own a car and be temporarily impaired in such a way that driving would not be safe.

Is it a requirement to live in the service area to be eligible for the DARTS Program?

The service area encompasses Fulton County. You must be a resident of Fulton County to use DARTS. Buses are assigned at each multipurpose center and the service area is a geographic area near the multipurpose center.

Once the eligibility form is submitted, how long will it take to receive the DARTS Handbook and schedule a trip?

Seniors should receive the DARTS Handbook within 10 business days of the submission of the Intake Form.

Other Transportation Services, Programs and Options

The residents of the West Highlands Community have a similar program. Is this program the same or similar to their program?

Staff is not familiar with the West Highlands Community transportation services; however, we will look into it. One would assume that their program would be limited to the residents of the West Highland Apartment Homes.



How is the DARTS Program different than the MARTA Paratransit Program?

DARTS is an age-based service funded 100% by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. MARTA Mobility is the area's transit authority's system to provide services to the disabled population. Eligibility for MARTA Mobility requires a qualifying disability that is documented by your physician. Additionally, MARTA Mobility provides services within 3/4 miles of a MARTA fixed bus route or rail line. There is a fare of \$3.50 for each ride on MARTA Mobility.

Financial Requirements of DARTS

Is the DARTS Program "income based"?

No, income is not a consideration for the service

DART Forms

What does the term "limited access to transportation" mean on the Intake Form?

The following situations would meet the requirements of the term "limited access to transportation."

The senior:

- Does not own a car (access to car).
- Permanently or temporarily cannot safely operate a motor vehicle.
- Has no consistent means of transportation via a family member, friend, neighbor, or other social services program.
- Has no access to services within reasonable walking distance.