

## **What is SweetHART Dial-A-Ride Transportation?**

SweetHART Dial-A-Ride is a door-to-door bus service provided by HARTransit for seniors age 65 or older and persons of any age with mobility impairments. Dial-A-Ride provides trips to these people with reservations in advance. All vehicles are fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

Service is available in Danbury, Bethel, Brookfield, and Ridgefield Monday-Friday and in Newtown and New Fairfield Monday-Saturday. Service policies and availability varies by town. Please note: Intertown trip policies vary by municipality.

## **Dial-A-Ride Registration**

Seniors age 65 and older may fill out our SweetHART Dial-A-Ride Senior Application. Please submit a photocopy of an ID with your name and date of birth.

Examples include:

- Driver's License
- Passport
- Green Card
- Birth Certificate
- Government issued ID.

Individuals of any age with a disability that limits mobility may complete the Dial-A-Ride application for persons with disabilities. Please include the name and contact information for a professional familiar with your condition in case there are any questions related to your application.

## **Service For Those With Significant Mobility Impairments**

Those with more significant mobility impairments may also be eligible for SweetHART ADA Paratransit service. There is a separate application process including a functional assessment for eligibility under this program. Please contact the office for details, or go to [hartransit.com](http://hartransit.com).

## **Application Determination Process**

Applicants will receive a written notice with a determination of eligibility within 21 days following the submission of a completed application. If you have not received a determination of eligibility, you shall be treated as eligible and provided service on the 22nd day until and unless HARTransit denies your application. If you are denied eligibility, or given temporary eligibility, you will receive a written notice with specific reasons for the decision

and a notice of your right to appeal.

## **SweetHART Dial-A-Ride Eligibility Appeal Policy**

The SweetHART Eligibility Appeal Policy can be found online at: [www.hartransit.com](http://www.hartransit.com)

## **Cost (exact change required)**

\$1.00 – One-Way

\$4.00 – Same day trips

Discount 10-Ride pass can be purchased online at [HARTransit.com](http://HARTransit.com) or at the HARTransit office for \$9, (62 Federal Road in Danbury), 8:30am-4:30pm Monday-Thursday and 8:30am-1:00pm on Fridays.

## **Booking Trips in Advance**

To request a trip, call (203) 744-4070 and press option 3, between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

You may make advance reservations for any purpose for the week you're in, and for any day in the following week, up until 4:00 p.m. the day before your trip. Trips for medical appointments can be scheduled for the current week and any day in the following two calendar weeks.

When you call, the scheduler will give

you a 30 minute window of time for which we will attempt to schedule your pick up time. We will call you back if we cannot schedule your trip within that window. Otherwise, anticipate that your bus will arrive during the time span given you.

## **Standing Booking Requests**

If you have a regular trip, you can set up a standing booking request. This does not guarantee a ride, but eliminates the need for a weekly phone call to schedule. Standing requests will be cancelled if the customer fails to make 80% of scheduled trips within a two month period.

## **Trip Scheduling Priority**

Booking requests are considered on a first-call/first-served basis, except during the peak calling period. With limited space in the schedule, many riders book trips as soon as they can. The peak calling period for reservations is Monday from 7:00 to 11:00 a.m., when the earliest bookings can be made for the following week.

To accommodate the large volume of requests during the peak calling period, reservation requests coming in between 7 and 11 a.m. on Monday are consid-

ered equally. This means that there is no advantage to calling at 7 a.m. as opposed to any other time up to 11 a.m., and there is no need to rush to be the first to call.

If there is a conflict between trip requests during the peak calling period, priority is given to the passenger with the more reliable riding history over the last 60 days. Limiting trip cancellations will improve your chances to get preferred pick-up times.

Please note that the peak calling period will be moved to Tuesday if the scheduling office is closed Monday in observance of a holiday.

### **Same Day Trips**

Same day trips may be made on a limited basis depending on openings in the schedule. There is a limit of 2 same day trips per month per rider, and same day trips have a higher fare of \$4. For round trips, both trips must be pre-scheduled (no will-calls) to ensure an available bus..

### **Will-Calls (Medical Trips Only)**

If you have a medical appointment and the time of your return trip is uncer-

tain, you may leave your return trip unscheduled and call when ready. The number to call when ready is (203) 744-4070, then press option 2. The next available bus will pick you up after you call. You must call at least 45 minutes before the close of service in your town. Please be aware that Will-call trips often require waiting time of over 30 minutes.

### **Canceling Your Trip**

To cancel your ride, call (203) 744-4070, and press option 2. Please cancel your trip with at least 12 hours' notice. Last minute cancellations leave open space on buses that could have been used by passengers denied reservations.

### **No-Show & Late Cancellation Policy**

The policies below address passengers that frequently fail to show for scheduled trips or cancel with insufficient notice.

Excessive trip no shows and late cancellations are an inconvenience to other passengers and reduce the efficiency of the bus service. A no-show occurs when a passenger fails to show for a scheduled trip. A passenger can-

celling at the door after a scheduled bus has arrived is also considered a no-show for the purpose of this policy.

A late cancellation is defined as a cancellation in which HARTransit fails to receive 12 hours advance notice.

No shows or late cancellations that are beyond the control of the passenger do not violate the policy. Passengers must explain the reasons for no shows or late cancellations to receive such consideration.

Should passengers claim that patterns of no-shows or late cancellations are beyond their control, HARTransit reserves the right to request documentation, including professional verification of matters related to the passenger's health or disability that may contribute to the pattern.

### **Passenger no-shows and late cancellation violate HARTransit policy when:**

There are six or more late cancellations or three or more no-shows within a 60 day calendar period and if the violations amount to 15% or more of all trips scheduled.

Passengers meeting their threshold will be notified according to the following schedule:

- 1st occasion – written warning
- 2nd occasion – Second written warning
- 3rd occasion – one week suspension
- 4+ occasions: two week suspension.

Penalties will progress if repeated within 12 months of the last violation. If more than 12 months pass since the last action, the progression restarts at the beginning. In addition, after each step, violation tallies restart from zero over the next 60 days.

Letters notifying passengers of a suspension offer the passenger an opportunity to request a hearing with the Director of Service Development to appeal the suspension before it is enforced. The hearing provides the passenger an opportunity to explain any mitigating circumstances that may prompt a reconsideration of the suspension. Passengers may request the hearing either verbally or in writing, and the suspension is delayed until the Director of Service Development makes a final decision.

## **Riding the Bus**

Please watch for your bus. Drivers will wait 5 minutes for you after their arrival, and then move on.

HARTransit drivers will escort a passenger from the common public entrance or door to the vehicle, and from the vehicle to the destination door. Assistance to the door is not provided to PCA's or guests. Drivers cannot enter any building, garage, common area or vestibule or assist with any of your items until you have reached the outside access door. Driver assistance does not include lifting/pulling/carrying a passenger from their seat or home, holding them upright, or carrying a customer up or down stairs.

In order to escort you to/from the door, the driver will need a clear, safe path of travel. Generally, the driver may not assist you through narrow walkways, across boards or temporary walkways, over grass, mud, dirt, packed ice or snow, or through low lying branches, etc. It is your responsibility to ensure that your driveway and walkways are cleared sufficiently to allow the driver to safely access your pick-up location. Drivers will not

jeopardize their safety or yours to access your home.

For those using wheelchairs, drivers will assist you to the door provided there is a ramp that meets the standards for ramp design established by the ADA. Metal and wood surfaces must have non-slip material applied.

- Drivers are not allowed to lift or carry wheelchairs up or down any steps.
- Drivers may not tip or in any way lift a wheelchair. This is for your safety and the safety of the driver.
- Drivers may not operate or push a motorized device.
- Drivers must keep the vehicle in plain sight at all times.
- Drivers cannot push customers sitting on a rollator walker. The rollator walker is a walking aid only cannot be used as a transportation device.

If there is a concern about a path of travel or a particular ramp, a supervisor will visit the location and assess the safety concerns. You will be notified in writing if any concerns are found that will limit service. We will still be able to transport you on the vehicle, but we will not be able to assist you to the door until the issue(s) outlined in the

letter are addressed or a reasonable alternative solution is agreed upon.

## **Baggage & Groceries**

Grocery bags and parcels are permitted on HARTransit vehicles, but passengers must maintain control over these items and carry them on the bus themselves in one trip. Drivers will assist with groceries and parcels provided this can be done safely and quickly. HARTransit will make reasonable accommodations to passengers with disabilities that need more assistance. Items with wheels, such as carts or strollers, must be collapsed during travel.

The following are not permitted:

- Large items that restrict movement within the bus
- Items which are dangerous or offensive to other passengers
- Baggage that requires excessive time to load or unload
- Items that could not be controlled if the bus braked suddenly

## **Service Animals & Pets**

Service animals are welcome on HARTransit vehicles. If you travel with a service animal, please let the schedul-

ers know when you book your trip. Pets up to 20 pounds may be transported in carriers designed for that purpose. Drivers cannot help passengers carry pets.

## **Mobility Aids**

HARTransit buses accommodate all wheelchairs, scooters or other mobility devices up to the maximum physical dimensions and constraints of the bus. HARTransit vehicles have lifts and ramps with an 800 pound capacity. Drivers are trained to safely operate wheelchair lifts and secure mobility devices on the bus.

Scooter users are asked to transfer to a seat after boarding. Most scooters cannot be tied down as securely as a standard wheelchair and are not designed for use on a moving vehicle. Other mobility devices such as walkers and canes are accommodated. Passengers that have trouble with steps may ride the lift. Respirators and portable oxygen are also permitted.

SweetHART buses do not carry stretchers.

## **Personal Care Attendants & Companions**

Please let the scheduler know if you are



traveling with a PCA or companion. A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) rides free of charge with any passenger with a disability. PCAs provide assistance to disabled riders beyond that which can be provided by the driver. Any passenger may ride with a companion that is not SweetHART eligible. Companions are accepted on a space available basis, have the same origin and destination and pay the same fare as the registered passenger.

**Extreme Weather Policy**

HARTransit may curtail SweetHART operations if travel conditions are unsafe. HARTransit will call any passengers affected by a cancellation of service, and offer early return trips for riders transported prior to the onset of unsafe conditions. Please listen to WLAD (800AM) or WDAQ (98.3 FM) for service cancellation information or call the HARTransit office. For the latest information follow HAR-Transit on Twitter.

**Reasonable Modifications**

HARTransit will consider reasonable modifications to its services in order to assist riders with disabilities and to ensure that an individual’s disability does not

preclude him/her from having access to all HARTransit’s services.

Reasonable modification requests may be emailed to info@hartransit.com, mailed to HARTransit at 62 Federal Road, Danbury, CT 06810 or by calling 203.744.4070.

**Customer comments**

If you have a complaint about the accessibility of our transit system or service, or believe you have been discriminated against because of your disability, you can file a complaint. Please provide all facts and circumstances surrounding your issue or complaint so we can fully investigate the incident.

You may file complaints by phone, email or in writing.

HARTransit has written complaint forms for those that feel their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act as a disabled person have been violated or if they feel they are being discriminated against under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 based on National origin, race or color. To file a complaint or for more information, go to: <http://www.hartransit.com/ada-accessibility>, or contact the HARTransit administrative office at 203-744-4070 ext. 200 during business hours.

**2020  
SweetHART  
HOLIDAY SCHEDULE**

**Standing Booking Requests** will not be processed for the holidays below.

- Wednesday, January 1st:**  
New Years Day - Sunday schedule
- Sunday, April 12th:**  
Easter - No service available
- Monday, May 25th:**  
Memorial Day - Sunday schedule
- Saturday, July 4th:**  
Independence Day - Sunday schedule
- Monday, September 7th:**  
Labor Day - Sunday schedule
- Thursday, November 26th:**  
Thanksgiving - No service available
- Friday, November 27th:**  
Black Friday - Sunday schedule
- Thursday, December 24th:**  
Christmas Eve - Sunday schedule
- Friday, December 25th:**  
Christmas Day - No service available
- Thursday, December 31st:**  
New Years Eve - Sunday schedule

**2021**

- Friday, January 1st:**  
New Years Day - Sunday schedule



**What is SweetHART  
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Service** 2020



**Contact Information**

**Phone #** ..... (203) 744 - 4070  
**Fax #** ..... (203) 744 - 0764

Will-Call (Medical Trips Only)	
Cancellations & Confirmations	Press 2
SweetHART Reservations	Press 3
Lost & Found	Press 6
Pass Sales & Schedule Information	Press 7
Certification Questions	
Customer Comments	Press 8
Weekends & Holidays	
ADA Next Day Reservations	Ext. 232



62 Federal Rd. Danbury, CT 06810  
[www.HARTransit.com](http://www.HARTransit.com)