

## SF Paratransit Rider’s Guide 3 – Taxi & Ramp Taxi Services

This Guide is available in accessible formats.

Please contact SF Paratransit at  
(415) 351-7000  
TTY (415) 351-3942  
[www.sfparatransit.com](http://www.sfparatransit.com)

To be sure the taxi company you are calling participates in the SF Paratransit program, please call SF Paratransit at (415) 351-7090

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## **Introduction**

This San Francisco Paratransit Taxi Rider’s Guide will be helpful if you are registered to use the SF Paratransit Taxi program. Please read this along with Guide 1, the General Information Rider’s Guide, which will provide you with more information about SF Paratransit services and programs.

Please note that the SF Paratransit Taxi program is not an “Americans with Disabilities Act” (ADA) paratransit service. However, it is similar to ADA paratransit service and it may satisfy the transportation needs of many ADA-certified riders. Some individuals may prefer the convenience of same day taxi services to the pre-scheduled ADA paratransit van service (SF Access). For more information about the SF Access van service see our Rider’s Guide 2.

## **SF Paratransit Service Area**

Paratransit taxi services are provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Service is provided throughout San Francisco, to Treasure Island, and to northern Daly City in San Mateo County. The Daly City Boundary encompasses a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile zone from any San Francisco Muni route.

The service area does not include the San Francisco International Airport. For trips to destinations outside of the service area, you must use other regional paratransit services, which are described in Guide 1.

If you are not sure if your destination is in the SF Paratransit Taxi service area, please call SF Paratransit at (415) 351-7052.

## **Getting Taxi Services**

Typically, newly eligible paratransit riders are first certified into the SF Access ADA van program. We may offer you participation in the SF Paratransit Taxi program after you have used the SF Access system for a period of time. Some paratransit riders may be immediately offered enrollment in the taxi program; these include individuals needing dialysis, riders 69 years of age or older, or wheelchair users needing ramped taxi services. Please note that individuals must first be determined ADA-eligible for paratransit before they can be offered paratransit taxi services.

## **Selecting a Taxi Company to Call**

Once you are registered in the SF Paratransit Taxi program, you may call any cab company in the program. All cab companies in San Francisco are required by City ordinance to participate in the SF Paratransit program and must accept payment with the SF Paratransit Debit Card. (See *SF Paratransit Debit Card* section on page 5 for further information.) Sometimes a cab

company may fall out of compliance with program rules and temporarily not be able to participate in the SF Paratransit program. To be sure that the cab company you select is participating in the SF Paratransit Taxi program, please call our Taxi Hotline at 351-7090.

### **When to Call for a Taxi**

Call the cab company as soon as you know you will need a taxi, but at least 30 minutes before you absolutely need the ride. If you have a set appointment, be sure to allow ample time to get there. Even though taxi rides are direct, you need to allow enough time for the driver to get through traffic. For wheelchair accessible ramp taxi service, since there are fewer vehicles available, we recommend that you call one hour in advance of your preferred pick up time.

A taxi is considered on time if it arrives within 30 minutes from the time that you placed your request. To report repeatedly late service or any other problems with taxi service, please call the Paratransit office at (415) 351-7052 or 311. This will help us improve our service.

When you request a taxi, listen carefully to the questions the dispatcher asks. The more detail you give, the better service the cab company is able to give you. If you use a wheelchair (or are riding with someone using a wheelchair), please be sure to immediately tell the taxi company dispatcher that you need a wheelchair accessible ramp taxi.

During holidays, eves of holidays, Friday afternoons, or at any time when the weather is bad, you may find it more difficult to get taxi service. Please keep this in mind when requesting sedan or ramp taxi service, and allow extra time. If you have a specific appointment and you do not want to risk delays, you may wish to use our SF Access van service. Please refer to the SF Access Guide 2 for more information.

After 20 minutes, if your taxi has not arrived, call back to check on its status. If you decide it is taking too long to arrive, please be sure to call and cancel your request before calling another cab company. Failure to call will waste resources and could lead to taxi dispatchers identifying you as someone who requests cabs and doesn’t cancel. This could lead to poor taxi service for you in the future.

### **Hailing a Taxi**

If you are in a “well-cruised” part of town, you may choose to hail a taxi on the street. However, be sure that the taxicab you are hailing participates in the SF Paratransit program. If you are not sure, ask the driver before

boarding. If you are transported and find out at your destination that the taxicab is non-participating, you will have to pay the fare in cash or another acceptable form of payment such as credit card. We cannot reimburse you for that fare. Please inform the SF Paratransit office if you think that you were incorrectly told that a cab company is not participating in the SF Paratransit Program.

### **Taking and Paying for a Taxi Ride**

#### **When you get in the Taxi:**

Present your SF Paratransit Debit Card to the driver before the start of the trip and tell him/her your destination. The driver will swipe your card to verify that you have enough funds in your account to pay for the trip. If you do not have enough value, you may choose to use the remaining amount on your SF Paratransit Debit Card and pay the additional cost of your trip with either cash or a credit card. If you don’t have any value in your account, you must pay for your entire trip with another form of payment.

If you have more than \$75 in your account, the balance check swipe at the beginning of the trip will indicate \$75+. This is to protect your privacy. If you want to check the full balance of your SF Paratransit Debit Card account, call toll free 877-SFTAXI-1 (877-738-2941), see *Balance Check* on page 7 for additional information.

#### **At the end of your trip:**

The driver will tell you the cost of the trip from the taxi meter. Give the driver your SF Paratransit Debit Card. The driver will swipe your card and then ask if you would like to provide a tip. Tipping is currently allowed with the SF Paratransit Debit Card (subject to change). **It is YOUR CHOICE whether or not to provide a tip.** If you choose to provide a tip, the system will automatically calculate the tip at 10% of the ride, up to a maximum of \$2, and deduct it from your SF Paratransit Debit Card account balance along with the fare amount. The driver will print two receipts – one for you to sign and return and one for you to keep for your records. Your receipt will show the remaining balance in your SF Paratransit Debit Card account after the trip you just completed. For your privacy, \$75+ will show on your receipt if you balance is greater than \$75.

### **No Wait Trips Allowed**

You may not ask the taxi driver to wait for you with the meter running on any paratransit ride. For instance, if you are picking up a prescription at the pharmacy, you must have the driver stop the meter when he/she drops you

off and pay that fare. The driver, at his or her discretion may choose to wait for you, with the meter off, but a new trip must start once you re-enter the vehicle.

### **Attendants & Companions**

An attendant and at least one companion may accompany you. The San Francisco Transportation Code allows you to ride with the maximum number that can be safely secured and transported (usually four adults). No extra fares will be required for the additional passengers.

An attendant or any companions must start and end their ride with you. Only the ADA-certified rider may possess and use the SF Paratransit Debit Card. An attendant or companion cannot under any circumstances use your SF Paratransit Debit Card.

### **Traveling with Children**

If you will be traveling with a child under the age of eight (8) who is less than four feet nine inches (4’9”) in height, you must provide the child’s safety seat so that you may properly secure the child in it in accordance with California law. Any child seat used on SF Paratransit must meet the State of California standards for a child of that size and age. The driver will provide assistance if necessary.

### **SF Paratransit Debit Card**

The SF Paratransit Debit Card is a uniquely encoded debit card that includes your photo, eligibility expiration date, paratransit ID number and a 16 digit debit card number. It is used to pay for your SF Paratransit taxi trips, and it also serves as your SF Paratransit ID card. When you first receive your SF Paratransit Debit Card, you must activate the card by calling the toll free number provided with your new card and following the instructional prompts. Before you use the card you must add value to it (see *Purchase Date and Adding Value* on page 6). Make sure to sign your card on the back. If you are unable to sign the card, print or have someone print UTS (unable to sign) for you in the signature block.

Your SF Paratransit Debit Card can only be used when you are in the taxi for valid SF Paratransit trip. It is illegal to allow anyone to use your card. This action could lead to suspension or revocation of your taxi riding privileges, and you may be subject to criminal prosecution. The San Francisco Police Department helps monitor for fraud.

### ***Monthly Allotment/Requesting Additional Value***

When you are first enrolled in the SF Paratransit Taxi program, you will receive a standard monthly allotment. At that time, you may request a higher monthly allotment by filling out a brief form documenting your typical monthly trips. SF Paratransit staff will review your request and approve an increase based on eligible paratransit trips.

People who are conditionally eligible are expected to only use paratransit services for trips they cannot take on Muni or BART. Monthly SF Paratransit Debit Card limits will be strictly enforced.

To request additional value for a specific month due to an unanticipated increase in transportation needs, you must complete a special form. You may get this form at the San Francisco Paratransit office or online at [www.sfparatransit.com](http://www.sfparatransit.com). In addition to requesting additional taxi value for more taxi trips, you may also use the SF Access van program for eligible paratransit trips.

### ***Purchase Date and Adding Value***

To use your SF Paratransit Debit Card, you must add value to it, by mailing a check or money order to the SF Paratransit office (preferred) or by going into the office to pay. When purchasing debit card value by mail, please allow sufficient time for your payment to be received and processed. SF Paratransit is not responsible for the loss or delay of materials sent through the mail.

Your monthly purchase date will be established on the date of your first purchase.

If you add value to your Paratransit debit card ten or more days after your designated purchase date, we will assign you a new purchase date. For example if your purchase date was the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month and you don’t purchase until the 18<sup>th</sup>, your new purchase date will be the 18<sup>th</sup> of the month.

You may check your purchase date by calling toll free 877-SFTAXI-1 (877-738-2941) and following the prompts.

To add value to your card by mail, make your check or money order payable to **SF Paratransit**. Be sure to write your SF Paratransit Debit Card or Paratransit ID number on your check. You will receive \$30 in taxi service for every \$5.50 you pay (subject to change).

We encourage you to add value to your SF Paratransit Debit Card by mail, but if you choose to go to the SF Paratransit office, you must present your SF Paratransit Debit Card (which is also your SF Paratransit photo ID) to

our staff. If someone else goes into the office to pay for you, they will also be required to present your SF Paratransit Debit Card as well as their own government-issued identification.

### ***Pre-Purchasing and Storing Value***

With the SF Paratransit Debit Card, you may purchase value before your assigned purchase date, which will be stored in your reserve account until your purchase date. You may pre-pay up to 12 months in advance. Then, each month on your purchase date, the value of your monthly allotment will automatically become available on your SF Paratransit Debit Card. If you pre-pay and use all of your monthly allotment before your purchase date, the value that is stored will not be transferred from the account to your SF Paratransit Debit Card until your next purchase date.

### ***Unused Value***

If you have three months-worth of unused SF Paratransit Debit Card value on an active card, we cannot add value until at least one month’s allotment has been used (unused value on an active card is different from pre-paid, stored value). For example, if your purchase amount is \$90, and you purchase your full SF Paratransit Debit Card monthly allotment for three months but do not use any of the value (\$270), we will not be able to add value to your SF Paratransit Debit Card until you use at least one month’s worth of value (\$90). Any payments made when your card value is at its maximum will be held in your reserve account.

Any evidence we obtain which points to the possible misuse or abuse of the SF Paratransit Taxi program may result in your suspension or revocation from the program.

### ***Balance Check***

There are four ways to check your SF Paratransit Debit Card balance:

1. Call the toll free automated voice response system at **877-SFTAXI-1 (877-738-2941)** and follow prompts.
2. Ask any San Francisco taxi driver to swipe your card at any time to give you your balance. Remember, if you have more than \$75 worth of value on your card, for privacy reasons the receipt will say \$75+.
3. Call the SF Paratransit office at 415-351-7052 and ask a customer service representative to check your balance.
4. Log onto [www.sfparatransit.com](http://www.sfparatransit.com), the SF Paratransit website, and check the balance on the account.

**Other Information**

The General Information Paratransit Riders’ Guide 1 contains valuable information about topics such as transporting packages, mobility equipment, life support equipment and Rider/Driver responsibilities. Please carefully read and understand all sections of Rider’s Guide 1 and this Rider’s Guide before using SF Paratransit Taxi services. Also, please refer to Guide 2 for information about the SF Access Service.

**Thank you, and enjoy your ride.**

This Guide is available in  
accessible formats.

Esta información esta disponible en Español  
以下有中文資料提供Эту информацию вы можете получить на  
русском языке

**Participating Taxi Companies as of January 2017**

(Taxi dispatch services listed alphabetically)

<b>Company</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
<b>CityWide Dispatch*</b>	
CityWide Taxi	
Crown Cab	1-415-920-0700
Green Cab	
Metro Cab	
<b>Flywheel Taxi*</b>	1-415-970-1300
<b>Fog City Dispatch</b>	
American Taxicab	
Fog City Cab	
Lucky Cab	1-415-682-9988
Max Cab	
Regents Cab	
San Francisco Super Cab	
<b>Luxor Cab*</b>	1-415-282-4141
<b>National Dispatch*</b>	
Alliance Cab	
National Cab	1-415-648-4444
USA Cab	
Veterans Cab	
<b>San Francisco Taxi Dispatch*</b>	
Comfort Cab	1-415-870-2388
San Francisco Taxicab	
<b>Town Dispatch*</b>	
ABC Taxicab	
Eco-Taxi	1-415-401-8900
Town Taxi	
Vina Cab	
<b>Yellow Cab Dispatch*</b>	
Yellow Cab	1-415-333-3333
Union Cab	1-415-390-6000**

**Participating Taxi Companies in Northern San Mateo County**

**Serra Yellow Cab - Daly City\***

1-650-991-2345

\* Denotes taxi dispatch services that operate Ramp Taxis. As of November 2016, the city has 100 ramped taxi permits.

\*\*Union Cab dispatched by Yellow Cab Co-Op.