

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

This Guide is available in accessible formats.

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www.sfparatransit.com

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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.

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 either the San Francisco International Airport or the Oakland 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 1-415-351-7052.

Getting Taxi Services

Please note that the SF Paratransit Taxi program is not an “Americans with Disabilities Act” (ADA) paratransit service. Individuals must first be determined ADA-eligible for paratransit van service (SF Access) before they can be offered paratransit taxi services. For more information about the SF Access van service see our Rider’s Guide 2.

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 6 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 1-415-351-7090.

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 1-415-351-7052 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. Please notify the taxi dispatcher if you want a sedan vehicle; efforts will be made to accommodate your request. 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 to arrange alternative transportation or are able to hail a taxi on the streets, 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.

E-hailing of taxis is now available. For more information about e-hailing options, please call the SF Paratransit at 1-415-351-7052 or visit our website at www.sfparatransit.com.

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. See SF Paratransit Debit Card on page 6 for additional information.

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 1-877-SFTAXI-1 (1-877-738-2941) or visit www.sfparatransit.com. See Error! Reference source not found. on page 8 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.

If your debit card is not working or the machine processing the debit card is not accepting the card:

1. Make sure that you are using an activated SF Paratransit debit card.

2. Ask your taxi driver to drive a couple of feet forward as you may be in a “dead zone,” preventing the necessary cellular reception to process the payment.
3. If still not processing, request that the taxi driver complete a paper Manual Receipt and have the driver call the phone number listed to obtain an approval code.

You should not be required to pay the full meter fare using your personal funds if there are sufficient funds in your SF Paratransit debit card account. You may report this to SF Paratransit by calling us at 1-415-351-7052.

Sharing Taxi Rides

Did you know you can share a taxi with another Paratransit rider?

Some good examples of ride-sharing include SF Paratransit-eligible riders who live in senior housing or other large buildings with multiple units. By planning ahead, these Paratransit riders can consider sharing a ride to the grocery store by one rider paying the going trip with their SF Paratransit debit card and the other paying for the return ride with their card. For ride-sharing among three or more riders, one rider can pay this week and another the next week and so on. Couples living together and both registered to the taxi program may want to consider coordinating their rides so they can share a ride to appointments, the theater, or for other outings. Neighbors who are Paratransit taxi riders can ride together to a play, museum, or the mall.

For more information on ride sharing taxis with the SF Paratransit program, please call us at 1-415-351-7052.

Attendants & Companions

The San Francisco Transportation Code allows you to ride in the taxi with the maximum number of people that can be safely secured and transported (usually four adults). No extra fares will be required for an attendant or 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 to pay for a SF Paratransit trip. It is illegal to allow anyone else 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. 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. Coming soon, you will also be able to purchase debit card value by completing a credit card payment slip and mailing it to our office. 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. In-person payments are accepted by Visa, MasterCard, cash, check, or money order.

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 5th of the month and you don’t purchase until the 18th, your new purchase date will be the 18th of the month.

You may check your purchase date by calling toll free 1-877-SFTAXI-1 (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 \$6.00 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. For more information on your payment options, please call our Finance Department at 1-415-351-7051.

Pre-Purchasing and Storing Value – Reserve Account

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 reserve 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.

Balance Check

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

1. Call the toll free automated voice response system at 1-877-SFTAXI-1 (1-877-738-2941) and follow prompts.
2. Ask any San Francisco taxi driver to swipe your card 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 1-415-351-7052 and ask a customer service representative to check your balance.
4. Coming soon, you will be able to log onto www.sfparatransit.com, the SF Paratransit website, and check the balance on your account. Please call the SF Paratransit office at 1-415-351-7052 for more information.

Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Debit Cards

Lost, stolen, or damaged SF Paratransit Debit Cards must be reported as soon as possible to the SF Paratransit office by calling 1-877-738-2941 (24 hours/day, 7 days per week) or 1-415-351-7051 (during business hours).

Once a card is reported as lost, stolen, or damaged, it will be immediately deactivated, and the balance at that time will be added to a newly-issued paratransit debit card. The new card will be available for pick-up in person at the SF Paratransit office or can be mailed out to the registered rider via first class U.S. Mail. New or replacement cards may only be mailed out to the registered rider’s mailing address on file with the SF Paratransit office.

The Paratransit office is not responsible for any account balance value that may have been used before the rider reported the card as lost or stolen. A rider may have his/her debit card replaced for free only one time per three-year period. After the first free replacement, cards will be replaced at a fee of \$5 per card.

Riders should keep their paratransit debit cards away from all magnets and cell phones to limit the possibility that the card will get damaged.

Misuse of SF Paratransit Debit Card

You are expected to adhere to the rules of the SF Paratransit Taxi program at all times. Program violations may include but are not limited to:

- Use of your SF Paratransit Debit Card with insufficient funds
- Use of an inactive SF Paratransit Debit Card
- Use of your SF Paratransit Debit Card for a ‘round trip’ or ‘wait trip’
- Use of your SF Paratransit Debit Card for a fare exceeding the allowable limit
- Use of your SF Paratransit Debit Card for a trip that originates or terminates outside of the SF Paratransit service area
- Use of your SF Paratransit Debit Card by anyone other than yourself

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. For more information about program violations, please call the Paratransit office at 1-415-351-7052.

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.

Participating Taxi Companies as of July 2017

(Taxi dispatch services listed alphabetically)

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

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 July 2017, the city has 100 ramped taxi permits.

This Guide is available in accessible formats.

Esta información esta disponible en español.

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