



# LiftLine Service

1115 Jack Wells Blvd.  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71107  
(318) 673-5316

## PARATRANSIT RIDER HANDBOOK



### Our Mission:

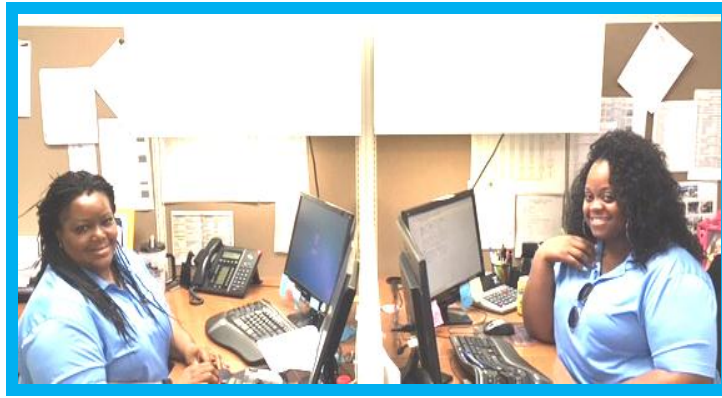
Working to make a difference in our customers' lives by providing safe, dependable, convenient and courteous service.

June 2016  
[www.sportran.org](http://www.sportran.org)

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Note: The information contained herein is subject to change without prior notice. Please call SporTran at (318) 673-5316, for the latest Paratransit Service information. Updated information may be found on our Internet site at [www.sportran.org](http://www.sportran.org)



## Contact SporTran LiftLine Paratransit Service

### *Reservations and Customer Service*

#### **Business Hours – LiftLine Scheduling**

Monday – Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

LiftLine Scheduling, Dispatch and General Information ..... (318) 673-5316

Dispatch (Including After Hours and Weekends)..... (318) 222-9010

Email..... [LiftLine@sportran.org](mailto:LiftLine@sportran.org)

LiftLine Eligibility Questions ..... (318) 673-7415

#### **Mailing Address:**

SporTran/LiftLine  
1115 Jack Wells Blvd.  
Shreveport, LA 71107



## SporTran LiftLine Paratransit Service

Hello, and welcome to SporTran's LiftLine Service. This handbook was put together with you in mind. We hope you find it helpful and easy to use.

### **What is LiftLine?**

Riding the regular SporTran Bus isn't always possible when you have a disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that transit agencies like SporTran, make their bus services user friendly for people with disabilities. The ADA also requires transit systems to provide paratransit service when someone can't take the bus because of their disability. In Shreveport and Bossier City ADA paratransit services are provided by LiftLine. LiftLine is a paratransit van service that is specially equipped with wheelchair lifts/ramps and other accessibility features that allow for maximum mobility for customers with disabilities. LiftLine operates on a demand-response basis for pre-qualified paratransit eligible residents and visitors within the Shreveport/Bossier City limits, and those that live outside the city limits within  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles from any fixed route.

### **How is LiftLine different than the bus?**

First of all, LiftLine is a more expensive service to operate than the regular bus. Fares pay a portion, but local taxpayers pick up most of the cost. If you can take your trip on the regular bus, SporTran wants to support you doing that. Not only does it save taxpayers' dollars, it also puts you in control of your transportation. But if you can't take the trip on the bus because of your disability, LiftLine is here to assist you.

LiftLine drivers follow routes made up of trips requested in advance by LiftLine riders. The ride is shared so the route is rarely direct. The LiftLine driver will pull up to a safe and legal space close to where you are waiting and help with getting you on and off the van. If you need special assistance, such as door to door, or hand to hand service, these services are available.

## SporTran LiftLine Discrimination Policy

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs & activities receiving Federal financial assistance (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

SPORTRAN is committed to practicing non-discrimination. If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination you may file a complaint with the SPORTRAN Title VI Coordinator.

*For more information visit us on the web at [sportran.org](http://sportran.org) or call the SPORTRAN Title VI Coordinator at (318)673-7400.*

## SporTran Driver Rights Clause

The LiftLine driver reserves the right to **NOT** transport any rider that is too ill to sit up and be secured in their seat, nauseous, vomiting, or bleeding. The driver will first notify dispatch of the rider's condition and then, if necessary, advise medical authorities of either the rider's need for medical attention or that they must remain at the medical unit until they are well enough to travel on the van.

## LiftLine Fare

- ✓ Cash \$2.50  
**(Please Have Exact Fare)**
- ✓ Ticket – Books of Tickets are \$25 for a Book of 10.  
(Tell the scheduler when you schedule your ride, if you need to purchase a book of tickets.)
- ✓ Money Orders
- ✓ Checks

## SporTran Holidays – No service

- ✓ New Year's Day
- ✓ Memorial Day
- ✓ Independence Day (4<sup>th</sup> of July)
- ✓ Labor Day
- ✓ Thanksgiving
- ✓ Christmas Day

## Liftline Quick Start



1. LiftLine operates between the hours of 5:00 a.m. – 1:15 a.m. Monday thru Saturday, and 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Sundays.
2. We schedule rides up to two full week in advance beginning each Monday. We do not offer same day pick-up, you must call at least a day before to book a trip.
3. It is best to call and Schedule your rides during normal business hours, Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Have the exact address and zip code for your destination and pick up location if it is not from your home address.
4. Always be fully dressed and have all personal items that you will be taking on trip with you ready to board paratransit vehicle 15 minutes before and after your scheduled time. Driver can only wait 5 minutes for you to board the vehicle. The LiftLine vehicle could arrive 15 minutes after your pick up time due to traffic patterns or other unforeseen circumstances.
5. The LiftLine driver will collect the fare when you board the van. You can pay by cash, money order, check, or ticket.
6. You will share your ride with other passengers. Expect stops along the way before you reach your destination.
8. Please cancel all requests for scheduled rides as soon as you are aware you will not need them. If you have to cancel the same day, you must notify dispatch at least two hours prior to your pick-up time or you will be assessed a no-show ride, instead of a cancellation.
9. SporTran paratransit customers are required to use seat belts or securement devices at all times. Refusal to use seat belts or the appropriate securement system will result in the suspension of service.



## The LiftLine Ride

### How can I ride LiftLine?

- ✓ Get a SporTran LiftLine Paratransit Application from our website [www.sportran.org](http://www.sportran.org), our Main Office, or the Downtown Terminal. You can also call 318-673-7415 to have one mailed to you.
- ✓ Fill out the LiftLine application and return it to our main office.
- ✓ The SporTran Director of Transportation will review your application and will inform you of your status in 10-20 days upon receipt.
- ✓ If you meet the requirements, you will be certified as being a fully eligible or conditionally eligible rider.
- ✓ Contact our scheduling office and book a trip.

### Where can I go on LiftLine?

- ✓ Anywhere within the LiftLine service area. LiftLine customers go grocery shopping, to work, school, church, get their haircuts, meet up with friends, as well as medical appointments, physical therapy and more. There are no restrictions based on trip purpose.

## The LiftLine Ride – Booking a trip

If you need to be somewhere by a certain time, tell the LiftLine Scheduler what time you need to be there, the scheduler will give you the pick-up time from your home, or ride origin. The scheduler will also ask you to provide a return pick up time, (a time that you will be ready to return home), to go back to the origin of your ride. ADA guidelines require that our paratransit service mirror our fixed route buses. A normal trip on a fixed route bus could take up to 55 minutes. Therefore when scheduling your trips always consider that your trip could take up to 55 minutes.

If you need to make adjustments after you arrive at your destination, call the dispatch office and they will look at the schedule and see if it is possible to arrange a new return pick up time for you. We may not always be able to change your time.

## When can I schedule a ride?

- ✓ We schedule rides up to two full weeks in advance beginning each Monday. You can schedule rides Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Schedule your rides early to ensure you can get a specific day and time.
- ✓ **All scheduled rides must be booked at least the day before your ride. We do not accept same day requests.**

## What do I need to schedule a ride?

The LiftLine Scheduler may ask you these questions:

- ✓ Your name
- ✓ Your home address and phone number.
- ✓ The date of your trip, and the time of your appointment. The scheduler will let you know what time the driver will pick you up.
- ✓ The exact street address where LiftLine will pick you up from.
- ✓ The exact street address and zip code of where you are going, the time you need to be there and a phone number where you can be reached.
- ✓ The time you would like to be picked up for your return trip.
- ✓ The type of mobility aid you will be using.
- ✓ If you will be riding alone or with someone, and if they use a mobility aid.
- ✓ If a baby or child will be riding with you. Note: Remember to bring an infant or child seat; vans do not have them on board.
- ✓ If you will be bringing anything else with you on the van such as packages or a hand held grocery cart. Depending on available space, an average of five (5) standard size plastic shopping bags of groceries or other articles may be carried by a LiftLine rider.

## How do I cancel my ride?

Please cancel all requests for scheduled rides as soon as you are aware you will not need them. If you have to cancel the same day, you **must notify dispatch at least two hours** prior to your pick up time, or you will be assessed a no-show ride, instead of a cancellation.



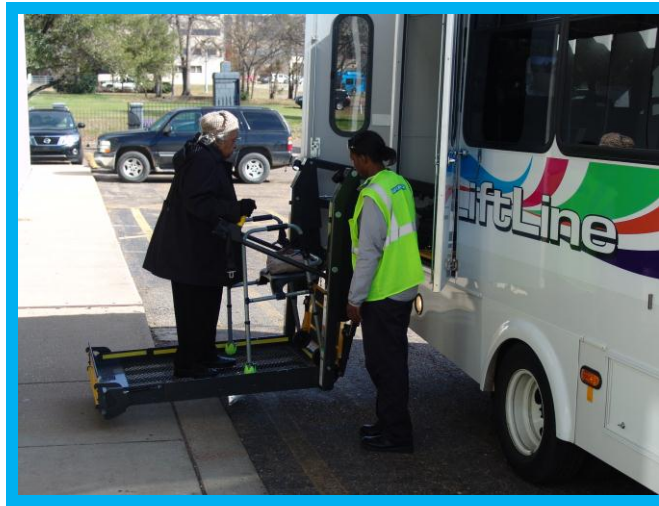


## The Day of my LiftLine Ride

- ✓ Listen to the weather forecast and dress for it. Carry water on hot days and bring medications that you might need. Make sure you have your LiftLine fares or tickets with you.
- ✓ Be looking for the van.
- ✓ If the LiftLine van does not come at your designated time, call LiftLine dispatch to check on your ride status. **Consider using a cell phone if you have to wait in a lobby or if you are somewhere where telephones are not available.**

### **What happens when the van arrives?**

- ✓ If the driver does not see you at the pick-up location, he/she will blow the horn. Remember to be ready 15 minutes before and after your scheduled pick up time. The driver can only wait 5 minutes before proceeding along his/her route.
- ✓ When you arrive to the van, the driver may ask your name to confirm your trip.
- ✓ The driver will help you board paratransit vehicle.
- ✓ The driver will also ask you for the trip fare or ticket at this time
- ✓ LiftLine requires that you use the safety equipment, such as seat belts; wheel chair tie down straps, lap belts, and shoulder harnesses.
- ✓ **If you do not board the vehicle within 5 minutes, dispatch will be notified to code the ride as a no-show and the driver will precede along his/her route. Please note, we will not be able to send another vehicle back to pick you up.**



## Additional Services

### **Standing Ride Same Place, Same Day and Time**

This is also called Subscription Service. We pick you up and take you to the same place, at the same time, on the same day, every week. You only call to cancel. Standing rides are cancelled on holidays so call us if you need to reschedule the ride for a different day in the week of holiday. Call LiftLine Scheduling to discuss availability, to set up the standing rides that you need.

### **Door-to-Door – Help Past the Curb**

Riders must call LiftLine scheduling to prearrange Door-to-Door Service if they think they need it, otherwise our standard will be curb to curb service. When door-to-door, or origin to destination is necessary, the LiftLine driver meets the rider outside the main entrance, walks with the rider to the van and helps the rider on board. If a rider needs assistance from their apartment to the lobby or from a building entrance to an office on another floor, they must have someone other than the driver assist them. Drivers will come into the common area of an apartment or office building to meet a rider only if the driver can stay within sight of the van, as there may be other riders on the vehicle. Drivers may not enter a rider's home, even to assist with a mobility device. A driver will also help riders off the van and walk them to the door of their destination. If they need more help after entering the building, the rider should arrange for someone to meet them.

### **Hand to Hand – Never Left Alone**

This service is available for those people that cannot be left alone. Your caregiver or Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is with you at the door when the LiftLine driver picks you up. When you get to where you are going, the driver will hand you off to the person there to meet you. If no one is at your destination or your home on the return trip, the LiftLine driver will keep you on the van and continue on their route. LiftLine dispatch will contact your caregiver and arrange for you to meet up with them. Trips in which a caregiver is not available to greet a rider upon their return home will result in a no show.

## **Personal Care Attendant (PCA)**

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to assist the individual in meeting their needs. SporTran recognizes that a PCA is necessary for some riders.

The PCA should have the same trip origin and destination as the customer. In addition, SporTran requires that space for the PCA must be reserved at the same time that the customer reserves their ride. No fare is required for a PCA; however an approved LiftLine rider who decides to act as a PCA for another LiftLine rider must pay a fare.

The customer may take along a companion in addition to the PCA. A family member or friend is regarded as a companion accompanying the customer, and not a PCA, unless the eligible customer regularly makes use of a PCA and the family member or friend is acting in that capacity.

Be sure to let the scheduler know that you will have a PCA on your trip when you make your reservation. A companion is anyone else who is traveling with you.

## **Guests/Companions**

Guests or companions of any age are allowed to accompany riders on a space available basis. Companions pay regular fare and must get on and off at the same location as the customer. Riders are required to inform the scheduler when making reservations each time companions will accompany them. They will also be responsible to mention whether the companion will be using any mobility aids such as a wheelchair or walker.

## **Infant and Child Restraint Systems for LiftLine**

Louisiana State Law mandates that children under the age of 6 years, or less than 60 pounds, must be in an appropriate child restraint system or booster seat that is age and size appropriate, in accordance with manufactures recommendations. Children 6-12 years of age must be restrained by a lap belt, shoulder harness, or an age/size appropriate child safety or booster seat.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (**NHTSA**) states that children who are 4 feet, 9 inches, or 57" tall (usually age 8 or older), can use the adult seat belt system, if it fits properly e.g., lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest. Children usually at age 4 and 40 pounds should ride in booster seats, until the standard vehicle seat belts fit properly.

The child's parent or guardian is responsible for providing an appropriate child restraint system (safety seat or booster seat) compatible with safety belts on LiftLine vehicles. When required, the van driver will assist to secure the child seat after you have secured your child in it. If the driver feels the seat is unsafe, or it cannot be safely secured in the van, you may be denied service.

## **Visitor Policy**

SporTran honors paratransit certifications from other transit systems. An individual from out of town requesting service must present proof of their certification. A letter from their home transit agency stating paratransit eligibility is acceptable.

Documentation must include the name of the eligible individual, the name of the certifying paratransit provider, the telephone number of the provider's Paratransit Coordinator/Manager, an expiration date (if any), and any conditions or limitations on eligibility.

LiftLine will only provide service to a visitor for twenty-one (21) days within a 365 day period. A visitor who expects to be in the Shreveport/Bossier area for any extended period of time and use LiftLine Services for more than twenty-one (21) days in a 365 day period should apply for a LiftLine Services as soon as possible.

## **Important Information**

### **Securement**

SporTran paratransit customers are required to use seat belts and/or securement devices at all times. Refusal to use seat belts or the appropriate securement system will result in the suspension of service.

All wheelchair users must ride in designated securement areas. If you would like to transfer to a seat from a wheelchair, please tell the scheduler when booking your ride. Manual wheel chairs should have serviceable wheel locks. For safety reasons, wheelchairs must be tied down, and the lap belt and shoulder harness should be installed unless there is a disability-related reason not to use these safety devices. Persons who are not wheelchair users, but use other mobility aids, will be allowed to use the lift if they are not physically able to use stairs, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements.

### **Mobility Devices on LiftLine**

We record the mobility aids you use when you register with LiftLine. Let the scheduler know when you book your trip which mobility aid you plan to bring. If you have a new mobility aid, call LiftLine Scheduling to let them know. The scheduling department may need to adjust the van schedule to ensure the correct space and time needed to board and de-board the van with your new mobility aid. If you have a question about the compatibility of your mobility device with our vans, let the scheduler know, and if necessary we can make an appointment to have your mobility device (wheelchair or scooter) weighed and measured to make sure we can safely transport you.

### **Restrictions on Customer Behavior**

Profanity or abusive language/conduct will NOT be permitted on the LiftLine vans, or when communicating with LiftLine dispatch or scheduling. Weapons of any type will not be allowed on LiftLine vans. Radio/tape/CD players must be equipped with headphones to be used on the vans. Eating, drinking,

or smoking will not be allowed on the vans. Medical exceptions may be made to allow eating when necessary.

## **Illegal or Disruptive Conduct**

Service will be suspended or refused to customers who engage in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct. The nature of the incident will determine whether an individual is suspended temporarily or permanently. For example, a person whose behavior threatens or has threatened the safety of Paratransit personnel or other customers may be refused service (permanent revocation of eligibility), or be required to have a PCA travel with them in order to control the threatening behavior. An individual who contests a refusal of Paratransit service may appeal the decision through the administrative appeal process.

## **Suspension of Service Appeal Process**

Before no show suspension may take place, SporTran will notify the passenger by mail of the intention to suspend service. This notification shall inform the passenger of the reason(s) for the proposed suspension and shall state that the passenger has a right to appeal.

Passengers must request a suspension appeal hearing within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the Policy violation suspension letter.

The passenger may request a suspension appeal hearing by:

E: [LiftLine@sportran.org](mailto:LiftLine@sportran.org)

**Mail in.** SporTran Appeals Committee

1115 Jack Wells Blvd.  
Shreveport, LA 71107

The no show appeal committee will consist of a three (3) person panel of individuals not involved in the original decision. The appeal committee will:

- Conduct a hearing within 30 calendar days of the passenger's request to affirm or rescind the suspension decision
- Only meet to address suspension of service
- Affirm or rescind the decision within 30 working days after the hearing Unrestricted service will continue until the committee renders its decision.

If the appeal appointment is no showed without notification or rescheduled by the customer beyond 30 days from the original request date, then the original suspension will be upheld.

The decision of the appeals committee is final. The no show appeal process is unrelated to eligibility and will not be used for contesting established SporTran policies.

## **Grocery Bags & Item Restrictions**

Drivers will assist a passenger by placing any articles, e.g., shopping bags, grocery bags, etc. in a safe location outside the van. **AT NO TIME WILL THE DRIVER TAKE ARTICLES INTO A RIDER'S HOME.** Depending on available space, an average of five (5) standard size plastic shopping bags of groceries or other articles may be carried by a LiftLine rider.

LiftLine drivers are not expected to lift or carry objects weighing more than 25 pounds. If riders have purchased a heavy or bulky item, they should arrange to have it delivered rather than trying to carry it aboard the van. LiftLine drivers reserve the right to refuse transport of items too heavy or bulky.

## **Lost and Found**

Items found on the van are kept for 30 days. Call LiftLine scheduling/dispatch and give customer service a description of your lost item and the date and time of your trip. Items can either be returned to you by a LiftLine van when one is in your neighborhood or you can arrange to pick them up.

## **LiftLine Suspension Appeals Policy**

Passengers who frequently fail to properly cancel a trip, do not show up in time for their scheduled ride, or (in the case of hand-to-hand customers) whose caretakers fail to be present to receive them at time of drop off, will be subject to a progressive penalty that may lead to service suspension. The following actions are considered no show occurrences for the purpose of this policy:

- When a vehicle arrives for a passenger inside the trip window and the passenger does not board the vehicle within five (5) minutes
- When a passenger refuses a scheduled trip at the door (also known as a Cancel at the Door)
- Late cancellations that occur one (1) hour or less from the beginning of the 30 minute window trip time (also known as a Late Cancel)
- When a hand-to-hand passenger's caretaker is not present to receive them at the time of drop off **NO SHOW SUSPENSION POLICY.**

Once a passenger reaches four (4) no shows in one calendar month and if these no shows total 11% or more of their trips in that calendar month, the SporTran suspension policy will take effect. No passenger shall be suspended under this policy for having 3 or fewer no show occurrences in one month. The 11% tolerance rate will be adjusted accordingly each year and was established according to industry best practices. To find the current no show tolerance percentage rate for the current year, visit [www.sporTran.org](http://www.sporTran.org) or call (318) 673-5316.

The progressive suspension policy is as follows:

- First suspension occurrence will result in a 4 day suspension penalty.
- Second suspension occurrence will result in a 7 day suspension penalty.
- Third suspension occurrence will result in a 14 day suspension penalty.
- Fourth through twelfth suspension occurrence will result in a 30 day suspension penalty.

The timeframe for the progressive suspension policy is one (1) calendar year beginning on January 1<sup>st</sup> of every year. Passengers with four or more no shows and whose no shows also exceed 12% or more of their trips in one month will be notified by mail with a letter containing: The dates when the no shows occurred, the dates of the pending suspension, and instructions on how to make an appeal.

### **Cancellations**

Excessive cancellation of rides, including those that are within the two (2) hour advance notice window described above will be monitored. If SporTran determines that excessive cancellations display a repeated pattern or practice, the customer will be contacted to determine the cause of the cancellations. Excessive cancellations may warrant suspension of service. Please cancel your rides as soon as you know that the ride is not needed.

### **Destination Changes**

Destination changes 24 hours or more in advance of the trip may be considered based on availability only. Call scheduling to see if we can accommodate your request.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Why am I being given a 30-minute window?** We require that you be ready 15 minutes before the scheduled time, and to be aware that the van could arrive up to 15 minutes after the scheduled time. From the time you book your ride to the day of your ride, schedulers are adding riders and moving reservations. Being able to work with a window of time gives us the opportunity to add riders to routes and serve more customers. Traffic and weather also affect LiftLine van arrival times.

**What affects trip length?** Your ride will take about the same amount of time it would take to do the same trip on the regular SporTran bus; sometimes a little less. This includes the time it would take to travel to a bus, get on and off, and then get to your destination. LiftLine vans will make stops along the way to drop off other riders and will follow a route that may not go directly to your destination. Just like a bus.

LiftLine is different in comparison to the regular bus in that the route will change depending on the riders' destinations that day. Some days you may get to your destination a lot quicker than other days.

**How do you decide which rider is dropped off first?** There are many factors that go into scheduling your drop off. Your LiftLine driver needs to take you and the other riders with different appointment times to different stops. When you scheduled your ride, your destination was matched as closely as possible with the other riders' destinations. Then the route was built. It may not be obvious why the driver is following a particular route; however your LiftLine driver will always strive to get you and the other riders to your appointments on time.

**Why do I sometimes arrive early for my appointment?** We may drop riders off 30 minutes to an hour before their appointment to serve more riders. There are also times when a trip before you is cancelled or no-showed and your van gets to your destination sooner than scheduled.

**Can someone else make a reservation for me?** Yes. Let the scheduling office know in advance who is authorized to make rides on your behalf so that we can update your profile with the information.

**Can I choose where I sit on the LiftLine van?** Yes. In most cases you can choose your own seat. However, sometimes the driver will direct you to a seat. This is necessary when there is a particular mobility device that must be accommodated or a customer needs to be in a specific location for safety reasons.



**Can I change the time of my ride?** Yes. You can call LiftLine scheduling a day or more prior to your scheduled ride and ask for a different time, and the scheduler will make the change based on availability of the new times. To make a change on the day of your ride, call dispatch to ask for a different time for your pick up or your return ride, based on space availability. For instance, if your medical appointment is completed early, you can call dispatch for an earlier pick up, but you may have to wait until your scheduled time, if an earlier ride is not available.

Also, be sure to call dispatch as soon as you know you will be late and we will find the next available pick-up time. The earlier that you can let dispatch know, the better your chances of getting the return time that you need. **You can only change your schedule by calling the dispatch/scheduling office. The driver is not allowed to deviate from his posted schedule.**

**Can I call on the same day as my ride and ask to be dropped off at a different place?** Call dispatch, and they will look at the schedule to see if we can accommodate the change. But you can change a location if you call at least one day before your ride is scheduled. **DO NOT** attempt to change locations after you have boarded the van. Van drivers are not able to make changes, only dispatch can make a change **BEFORE** the van arrives.

**Can I bring a shopping cart?** Yes, when it can be safely secured. Let the scheduler know when booking your trip whether you will be bringing a folding or non-folding model.

## SporTran's LiftLine Complaint Policy

Routine complaints, such as van not showing up at your pickup location on the day of your ride, or other ride specific complaints, should be handled by calling LiftLine (318) 673-5316.

For other complaints about our service, please call the Director of Transportation at (318) 673-7400, or notify us via email at [LiftLine@sportran.org](mailto:LiftLine@sportran.org), or they can be mailed to SporTran, 1115 Jack Wells Blvd, Shreveport, LA 71107 Attn: Director of Transportation. You can also contact the SporTran Complaint line at (318) 221-7433. All complaints are documented, investigated and followed up on.



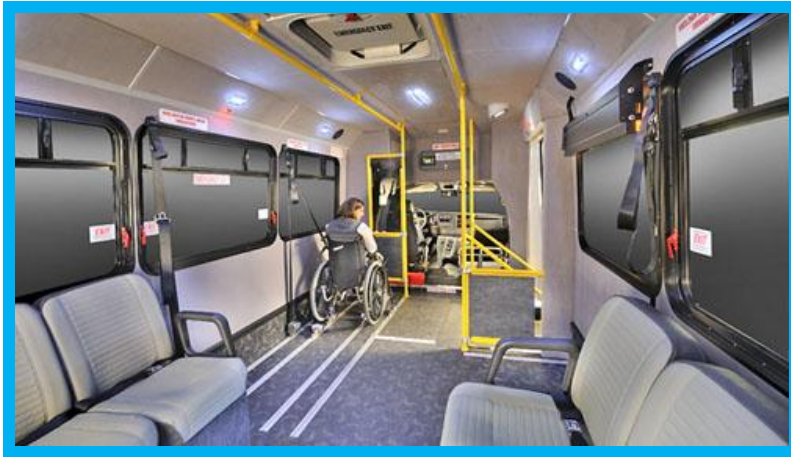
## Working Together

### **What you can expect from us**

- ✓ We will protect your safety
- ✓ We will guard your privacy
- ✓ We will treat you with respect
- ✓ We will keep you informed
- ✓ We will listen

### **What we can expect from you**

- ✓ To show courtesy to each other and to our staff
- ✓ To tell us when your ride doesn't go well
- ✓ To let us know when we do better than expected
- ✓ To follow LiftLine Policies and Procedures



## Riding Tips

- ✓ Be prepared for the weather. Carry a raincoat or poncho on rainy days.
- ✓ Have important medical information with you.
- ✓ Wear sturdy shoes with non-slip soles.
- ✓ Check cane tips to make sure metal is not showing.
- ✓ Make sure wheelchair and walker brakes are in good working order.
- ✓ Wear white or bright colored clothing and use reflectors, safety flags, and bicycle lights on your wheelchair, walker, or scooter.
- ✓ Carry a card with your name, address, phone number and emergency contact information and instructions.
- ✓ Keep backpacks and bags lightweight and zipped. On wheelchairs consider using a side pouch or small bag under the seat for easy access.
- ✓ Tell the driver when you need help.

# Application and Certification Process

To apply for the LiftLine program, the prospective user must complete an application packet. Application packets may be obtained through the Director of Transportation's office at (318) 673-7415. Application packets are also available for pick up at the downtown terminal located at 400 Crockett Street, as well as the SporTran administrative office at 1115 Jack Wells Blvd.

The ADA Paratransit Eligibility application is divided into seven (7) sections.

## **Part 1 and 2 – General Information/Applicant Certification**

These sections must be completed by the applicant or their representative. The applicant **MUST ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS** in this part and the applicant's signature is required. The applicant must provide all requested information including identifying persons (if any) who assisted them with the application. All information given will be verified, and providing false or misleading information will result in denial/termination of service.

## **Part 3 and 4 – Applicant's Disability/Ability to Use Bus Service**

These sections ask specific questions concerning the applicant's functional limitations and their ability to utilize the regular bus service. Applicants please check only those that apply to you. Failure to complete all questions will result in the application being returned to you. Incomplete applications will not be accepted for processing.

## **Part 5 and 6 – Travel Information**

These sections ask specific travel related questions. Please provide information about the trips that you make/will make frequently.

## **Part 7 – Professional Verification**

This section must be completed by a professional familiar with the applicant's disability. This professional can be a physician, nurse, occupational or physical therapist, QMRP, QMHP, rehabilitation counselor, independent living specialist, etc. licensed by the state of Louisiana. An applicant should choose the one individual most familiar with the disability that prevents them from riding the regular buses.

## **Application Policies and Procedures**

Within twenty-one (21) days of receiving a completed application, the Director of Transportation will inform the applicant of the results of their eligibility determination. Please note that an application is only considered complete when all information is provided, any omission renders an application incomplete. Incomplete applications will be returned to the sender, and the 21 days will not start until the completed

application is returned to SporTran. If an application is approved, the applicant will receive an approval letter and a LiftLine Handbook.

If the application is denied, the applicant will receive a letter of denial with an explanation of reasons for the decision. This letter of denial will include instructions on filing an appeal. If SporTran has not made a determination of eligibility within 21 days following the receipt of a completed application, the applicant will be treated as eligible and provided service until a determination is made.

## **Recertification**

All SporTran paratransit customers will be required to recertify at reasonable intervals (normally every two years). A recertification packet will be mailed to you well in advance in order to allow maximum time for the process. If your card has an expiration date and you have not received a packet from SporTran six (6) weeks prior, please contact the Director of Transportation at 318-673-7415 to request one be mailed to you.

## **Important Points to Remember**

- 1) LiftLine is a limited special transportation service for persons with disabilities who because of a mental or physical disability find it impossible to use regular public transit.
- 2) LiftLine eligibility does not include persons who find it uncomfortable or inconvenient to get to and from bus stops.
- 3) The professional who verifies the applicant's disability should consider only the presence of a disabling condition, not the applicant's age or economic status.
- 4) Only those persons who qualify as ADA paratransit eligible will be able to use LiftLine.
- 5) Paratransit eligibility is a transportation decision, not a medical one. SporTran alone will determine paratransit eligibility based on the federal guidelines.

## **How do I determine if I am fully eligible or conditionally eligible?**

- ✓ Fully eligible means that there will always be a barrier to your riding the bus because of the limits your disability places on you. Any time you need to use transportation, schedule your trip with LiftLine.
- ✓ Conditionally eligible means there are barriers to you riding the bus but they might not always be present. It will depend on the actual trip you want to make. Generally speaking, if your destination has an accessible bus stop nearby and an accessible pathway from the bus stop to your destination, you may not qualify for that ride. Call LiftLine and schedule a trip when there are barriers. If you are not sure, call the LiftLine scheduler and he or she will help you determine if you qualify for a specific ride.

## **Non-eligibility Appeal Process**

Because ADA paratransit eligibility is established as a civil right, there is a special obligation to ensure that “due process” is observed. Therefore, every application for eligibility will be processed by the Director of Transportation who will make the initial determination. If the decision is made to deny eligibility, a Notice of Denial is sent to the applicant. This notice will include the reasons for denial and the procedures which may be used to appeal the decision. An individual who wishes to appeal a decision of non-eligibility has sixty (60) days

to make a written request to the General Manager. SporTran will respond in one of two ways. The General Manager may make a determination to allow your eligibility based upon a review of your case, or he/she may schedule an Appeals Hearing within thirty (30) days. The administrative appeals process will include a hearing where the applicant can be heard and present information and arguments. The Appeals Board conducting this hearing will be made up of a minimum of three (3) persons not involved in the initial decision to deny eligibility.

One member will be from SporTran and two or more will be persons from the community who are knowledgeable about disabilities and the ADA. The individual will be notified of the Appeals Board decision in writing or an appropriate accessible format which will include reasons for the decision.

SporTran will not provide service to individuals who are pursuing an appeal; however if the Appeals Board has not made a decision within thirty (30) days after the hearing, temporary service will be provided. This temporary service will continue until a decision on the appeal is reached.