

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Para-Taxi Debit Card Pilot Program

FROM: Kadri Külm, Paratransit Planner

DATE: September 2, 2020

Action Requested

None – information only.

Background

LAVTA's premium same-day Para-Taxi program started in 2007 as a pilot program and since has been part of the LAVTA service. Para-Taxi program is partially funded by an Alameda CTC gap grant. All LAVTA's ADA paratransit patrons qualify for the Para-Taxi program. The program is currently reimbursement based; meaning patrons pay the full fare up front and, after submitting paperwork, receive 85% reimbursement up to \$20 maximum reimbursement per one-way ride and up to \$200 per month. Over the years, LAVTA has made enhancements to the Para-Taxi program, such as recent addition of TNCs (Transportation Network Companies) Uber and Lyft to the currently eligible companies that patrons can utilize for their rides. This is particularly exciting because Uber provides cost-effective, same day, and wheelchair accessible service called Uber WAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle), which is also available for the Para-Taxi program. User feedback has been very positive for both the Uber/Lyft inclusion as well as the same-day wheelchair transportation. Also, patrons who do not have a smartphone to book rides can use a concierge service called GoGo Grandparent.

The newest enhancement is Para-Taxi debit card integration with the Para-Taxi program as an additional payment option. LAVTA was recently granted an Alameda CTC gap grant for the Para-Taxi Debit Card pilot program.

Discussion

LAVTA is currently conducting a soft launch on the Para-Taxi Debit Card pilot program. This was mentioned at the last TAAC meeting and an invitation was

extended to all ADA paratransit eligible TAAC members to participate in the pilot.

The program will be used in conjunction with the Wheels Para-Taxi program as another option for paying for the taxi/Uber/Lyft rides within the Para-Taxi program. Currently the program is only reimbursement-based, but this will add an option of not having to pay the full taxi fare up front. The participant would load 15% of the total value on the card either in person at LAVTA's office (when we open up for the public again) or by calling LAVTA office with their credit or debit card (other than the Para-Taxi debit card) and LAVTA will add the other 85%. For example, when the participant puts \$15 on his/her card, LAVTA will add \$85 and there will be \$100 total on the card. Other Para-Taxi rules and parameters still apply (such as the \$20 maximum reimbursement per ride).

Because LAVTA will cover \$20 maximum per ride, the maximum amount that can be charged on the Para-Taxi debit card for a one-way ride is \$23.53 (85% or \$20 LAVTA's portion and 15% or \$3.53 rider's portion). Similarly, the maximum amount that can be charged on the debit card per month is \$235.30 (\$200 paid by LAVTA and \$35.30 paid by the passenger). Para-Taxi participants can still use the reimbursement system as well. The debit card is just an additional option for paying for Para-Taxi rides.

Recommendation

None – information only.

Attachments:

1. Para-Taxi Program Riders Guide
2. Para-Taxi Reimbursement Request Form

What Is The Wheels Para-Taxi Program And Who Is Eligible?

The Wheels Para-Taxi Program is a premium same day taxi service available for certified ADA Paratransit riders. Para-Taxi is offered in addition to Wheels Dial-A-Ride service. You are encouraged to use taxis for some or all of the trips you would normally make on Dial-A-Ride.

Para-Taxi is a reimbursement-based program, which means that you have to pay the full taxi fare up front to the taxi driver or Transit Network Company (TNC) and then receive reimbursement from LAVTA.

What Are The Advantages Of The Para-Taxi Program?

- Cost (after reimbursement is often less than a Dial-A-Ride ticket)
- More flexibility
- Same day service
- Direct ride
- Great for return trips
- Companions travel for free on taxis, Uber and Lyft may charge a fee if using shared ride.

Are There Any Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles?

Uber offers Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) service.

DeSoto Cab Company, in addition to the regular cabs also has wheelchair accessible cabs available. There is a \$10 surcharge (in addition to the metered fare) when using this vehicle and Wheels will reimburse the \$10 accessible cab fee 100%.

How Do I Schedule A Ride And Which Companies Can I Use?

To schedule a taxi ride please call one of the following participating taxi companies directly or book Uber or Lyft ride from their app (do not call Dial-A-Ride):

1. Desoto Cab - (925) 777-7777

If you request a wheelchair accessible taxi, DeSoto Cab charges \$10 pick-up fee in addition to the meter fare. Please request a wheelchair van in advance if you can. Wheels reimburses the \$10 wheelchair accessible cab fee.

2. Yellow Cab of Tri-Valley - (925) 999-9999

How Do I Schedule A Ride And Which Companies Can I Use? (Continued)

3. Silver Cab Company - (925) 734-8888

4. Uber - www.uber.com

5. Lyft - www.lyft.com

In order to get reimbursed, you can only use the taxi or TNC companies in this list. You can also hail a cab as long it is one of the participating taxi companies. As other taxi companies might sign up, please check our web site wheelsbus.com for updated list and any other program updates/information.

How Do I Get Reimbursed And How Much Is The Reimbursement?

- 1.** Call one of the four participating taxi companies or book your trip via Uber or Lyft using their app. You can also hail a cab if it is one of the participating companies.
- 2.** Ask the driver for a taxi receipt (taxi receipts typically look like regular business cards). Without the receipt Wheels cannot reimburse you.
- 3.** Pay the full fare to the driver and tip if you choose.
- 4.** Fill out the Para-Taxi Reimbursement Request Form and mail it to Wheels along with your receipts.
- 5.** Wheels will reimburse **85% of the total taxi fare (meter fare plus up to 15% tip) up to \$20 maximum reimbursement per ride. Maximum reimbursement per person per month is \$200. Wheelchair accessible cab surcharge, if applicable, will be reimbursed at 100% and above the \$20 per ride and \$200 per month limit.**

How Do I Get Reimbursed And How Much Is The Reimbursement?

Wheels processes reimbursements every other week. For your convenience, we recommend that you send in several receipts at once, depending on how often you ride with taxis. To receive reimbursement, you need to fill out and send in Taxi Reimbursement Request Form along with your receipts. The form asks you to fill out the following information:

- Date and Time of the Trip
- Origin and Destination - address and type of place (home, drug store, etc.)
- Taxi company or Transit Network Company (TNC) name
- Satisfaction rating for your ride (options are Very Good, Good, Fair, Not Good, and Poor). The participating taxi companies have agreed to use taxi meters, charge the metered fare (extra fees for wheelchairs), issue taxi receipts per request, be on time (pick-up within 45 minutes of the trip request or within 10 minutes of a pre-scheduled trip) have clean cabs and deliver excellent customer service.

How Do I Get Reimbursed And How Much Is The Reimbursement? *(Continued)*

- How you would have traveled if not by taxicab?
- Meter fare, Tip (if applicable), Wheelchair Accessible Cab surcharge (if applicable), and Total Taxi Fare.

Wheels will send you a new Taxi Reimbursement Form with your reimbursement check. You can also download this form from our web site at wheelsbus.com.

What Is The Service Area?

Your trip has to originate from the Wheels Dial-A-Ride service area (Livermore, Dublin or Pleasanton). You may go outside of that area, but please keep in mind that long distance trips can be quite expensive and your maximum reimbursement per trip is \$20.

What Are The Taxi Rates?

Tri-Valley taxis currently charge \$2.50 per flag drop and \$2.50 per mile. **There is a \$10 surcharge for wheelchair accessible cabs.**

Am I Required To Tip The Driver?

No, however tipping taxi drivers is common practice and nice to do. Tips up to 15% can be included with the reimbursement request.

Can I Have Attendants And/Or Companions Ride With Me?

Attendants and companions may accompany you. No extra fares will be charged for the additional passengers on taxis, TNC's may charge a fee if using shared ride.

Don't Have A Smart Phone To Book With Lyft Or Uber?

GoGoGrandparent can schedule your ride for a small fee, which is eligible for reimbursement. Their phone number is (855) 464-6872 and website gogograndparent.com.

Para-Taxi Program

Rider's Guide



Serving ADA Paratransit eligible residents
in Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton



Customer Service

**wheelsbus.com
(925) 455-7500**

Funded by your voter - approved
Transportation dollars.



Updated: February, 2020

For Additional Information Call (925) 455-7500

WHEELS Para-Taxi Reimbursement Request Form



LAST AND FIRST NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

(Reimbursement checks will be sent to this address)

Date of Birth _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Please Note: Your reimbursement is 85% of the total taxi fare (meter fare plus up to 15% tip) or TNC (Uber or Lyft) fare up to \$20 maximum reimbursement per ride. Your maximum reimbursement per month is \$200. Wheelchair accessible taxi surcharge of \$10, if applicable, will be reimbursed in addition to the \$20 per ride and \$200 per month maximums. **A TAXI RECEIPT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL REIMBURSEMENTS! TAXI RECEIPTS AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 90-DAYS OF THE TRIP TAKEN!**

Date	Time	Origin	Destination	Taxi Company Name	Please rate your trip	If the trip you took by taxi not available, how would you have travelled	Meter Fare	Tip	Wheelchair Surcharge if Applicable	TOTAL FARE
					1.Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Good <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Fair <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Not Good <input type="checkbox"/> 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	1.Would have called Dial-A-Ride <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Would have not made the trip <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Asked someone to take me <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Other: <input type="checkbox"/>				
					1.Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Good <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Fair <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Not Good <input type="checkbox"/> 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	1.Would have called Dial-A-Ride <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Would have not made the trip <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Asked someone to take me <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Other: <input type="checkbox"/>				
					1.Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Good <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Fair <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Not Good <input type="checkbox"/> 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	1.Would have called Dial-A-Ride <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Would have not made the trip <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Asked someone to take me <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Other: <input type="checkbox"/>				
					1.Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Good <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Fair <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Not Good <input type="checkbox"/> 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	1.Would have called Dial-A-Ride <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Would have not made the trip <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Asked someone to take me <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Other: <input type="checkbox"/>				

Date	Time	Origin	Destination	Taxi Company Name	Please rate your trip	If the trip you took by taxi not available, how would you have travelled	Meter Fare	Tip	Wheelchair Surcharge if Applicable	TOTAL FARE
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					1.Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Good <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Fair <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Not Good <input type="checkbox"/> 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	1.Would have called Dial-A-Ride <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Would have not made the trip <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Asked someone to take me <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Other: 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>				
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					1.Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Good <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Fair <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Not Good <input type="checkbox"/> 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	1.Would have called Dial-A-Ride <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Would have not made the trip <input type="checkbox"/> 3.Asked someone to take me <input type="checkbox"/> 4.Other: 5.Poor <input type="checkbox"/>				

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE TAXI SERVICE: _____

INFORMATION IN THIS FORM IS CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

PLEASE SEND OR BRING THIS COMPLETED FORM AND YOUR TAXI RECEIPTS TO:
A check will be mailed to you

EXPIRES 6/30/2021

**Attn: Para-Taxi Program
Wheels/LAVTA
1362 Rutan Court, Suite 100
Livermore, CA 94551**

