



DATS News



Disabled Adult Transit Service
March 2016

ETS Accessibility

DATS 311 Info Sessions

The DATS Advisory Group (DAG) hosts regular information sessions called *DATS 311* – it is a great way to get a better understanding of how DATS works. These information sessions are aimed at DATS customers old and new, agency staff, caregivers, family members and anyone considering applying for DATS.

The next *DATS 311* is Tuesday, April 12th at 2:00 p.m. at the DATS office. Sessions usually run anywhere from 90 minutes to two hours. They include a presentation by members of DAG as well as an opportunity to take a tour of DATS.

The deadline to register for the next session is April 5th, call Shirley at 780-496-4554 or email us: dats@edmonton.ca to book your spot.

DWW pups in training, see page 6.



DATS Spring Safety Reminders

Spring Road Conditions

Spring road conditions can make it difficult for operators to stay on schedule and for dispatchers who try to accommodate all requests. Please be ready on time - at the start of your pick-up window - and allow a few extra minutes of travel time to ensure you arrive at your destination safely.

Note: customers can be on a DATS vehicle for up to 90 minutes as there may be multiple pick-ups and drop-offs during your trip – this is our service standard. Consider this and book a bit earlier to allow extra time to arrive at your destination.

Keep Sidewalks Clear!

DATS is a shared ride public transportation system and we depend on registrants, caregivers and facility managers to maintain their properties. We need a clear, wide pathway to ensure the safe pick-up and drop-off of clients. If a safe path is not available, DATS may be unable to provide service until it is cleared. In order for the DATS lift to lower safely, a width of 2.14 metres or 7 feet must be clear of snow.

Newsletter Note

This newsletter can be emailed straight to your inbox. It's the fastest, and the greenest way to stay in touch! To be added, contact: dats@edmonton.ca For newsletter requests, call us at 780-496-4567 (option 4).

Director's Message

It's hard to believe it's already March. With a milder winter this year, we have had some challenging icy conditions, but our dedicated and committed staff came through, maintaining our high level of service, delivering the freedom of transportation to the people of Edmonton safely. Also, thank you to DATS riders who have done an outstanding job keeping their walkways clear of ice and snow this year, helping us all stay safe in hazardous conditions.



This spring, DATS will be taking a closer look at our current trip booking policies. We hope to update and improve these policies and standards to increase operational efficiency and client satisfaction. Trip booking policy not only affects how you book a trip, but has ramifications throughout our service - including scheduling, dispatch and on-road operations. Our first step is to research best practices with other para-transit organizations.

Then, perhaps most importantly, once we have some information gathered and ready for review, we will provide you an opportunity to offer comments, suggestions and concerns. Watch for more information on upcoming collaborative stakeholder workshops and surveys in the May/June Newsletter, and look for our office staff conducting surveys on your bus during the spring or summer months.

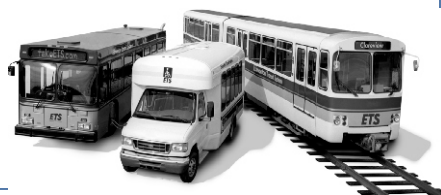
We look forward to working with you to make our service better!
Ralph Brokop, Director of DATS

ETS Fare Changes

Reminder: New ETS fares went into effect February 1, 2016.

This is the first time rates are being adjusted in three years. The new fares represent an average increase of approximately three per cent over 2015 fares. Adjusting fares aligns with City Council's multi-year budgeting process; reduces the tax levy related to transit services; and maintains Edmonton Transit's cost-recovery performance goals.

- ▶ DATS Cash Fare: \$3.25
- ▶ Adult Ticket Books: \$24.75
- ▶ DATS Monthly Pass: \$91.50



DATS Notes

Passenger Safety

DATS is dedicated to the safety of passengers on all trips. Passengers have to be safely and properly secured on all trips or they may be unable to ride on DATS. Proper use of a securement system (mobility aids) or seatbelt assembly (ambulatory) is a mandatory condition of using DATS.

DATS operators must properly secure all passengers. If you are not offered a seatbelt, please call us at 780-496-4567, option 4 and let us know.

Mobility Choices

Our ETS Customer Travel Training program is designed to help people with mobility challenges make use of Edmonton Transit, and to provide more choices for independent travel.

This free program is customized to meet the needs of the individual. Let us know what you need, and we'll do our best to design a training session that best meets your needs.

If you would like to find out what this program can do for you or would like to inquire about training sessions, please call our Accessibility Hotline at 780-496-3000, or email us at ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca

DATS Recertification

We are two years into the DATS Recertification Project. For those of you who may receive a package in the mail this year, we thought you might like a reminder of what recertification is all about. For those of you who have already recertified, thanks!

Why Recertify?

Just like everyone needs to renew a passport or a driver's license or a disabled parking placard, likewise, we need to renew registration for DATS. So, we started a DATS Recertification Project in February, 2014 – we revised our application form and updated our process to include an in-person component. This helps us to ensure all registrants' eligibility for the service is current and up to date with the status of the accessibility of the fixed route services. In our case, that's bus and LRT services. Recertifying all DATS clients is expected to take five years.

How does it work?

Each month, approximately 200 current clients will receive a letter from DATS requesting updated information. It's a self-serve approach for the most part in that individuals (or their caregiver) are welcome to "self-certify" (complete the forms themselves). If additional information is required, we may request a Health Professional Assessment form as well. Recertifying registrants may be asked to attend an in-person interview.

Please complete the necessary documentation within four weeks. Once DATS has the completed forms, a private medical organization (Capital City) will contact you to set up an in-person interview. All registrants who complete recertification will be provided with a DATS photo identification card.

Questions about recertification? Contact DATS Client Service Centre (780-496-4567, option 3) or by email to DATS@edmonton.ca



DATS ID Cards

- ▶ Orange Cards: do you have an orange DATS Registration card with a June expiry date? Don't worry; these cards will be replaced as customers go through the recertification process. Your orange card is valid during this process.
- ▶ Purple Cards: you may see customers on DATS with new purple cards. As we register new customers or recertify existing registrants, they are given new purple cards.
- ▶ Photos: some purple cards have photos. These photos are taken at the personal interview stage, now part of the regular application process (optional).
- ▶ Photo Note: if you have a purple registration card with no photo and you would like one, please contact DATS Registration and we will make arrangements for a photo.
- ▶ Expiry Date: you may be contacted to recertify before that date.
- ▶ ETS Reminder: don't forget – show your DATS registration card (orange or purple) on regular bus and LRT when you pay your fare and your escort (family member, friend, etc...) rides free! With spring on its way, it is a great time to give ETS a try!

DATS Notes

Phone Calls to DATS

Please note that phone calls into DATS are recorded for quality assurance and training purposes. DATS uses the recordings to ensure we are providing the very best customer service.

Cancelling Your Trip?

Remember - if you are cancelling your trip, you must give at least two hours notice to avoid a no-show. If you need to cancel multiple trips for a specific period of time, we can also do such requests.

Note: the Client Services agent may ask the reason for your cancellation. We use this information to ensure we're taking care of all your trip adjustments in the same call.

Please cancel as far in advance as possible - with more advanced notice, we may be able to assist someone else with their booking request. For all cancellations, call 780-496-4567 (option 1).

Stay Warm

Please dress warmly and wear footwear appropriate for the season. Our vehicles are heated, but there may be cold drafts on the vehicle when the doors are open and closed frequently.

Holiday Booking Schedule

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Customer Care Centre will be closed) on Good Friday (March 25) and Easter Sunday (March 27). The vehicles will be running as usual.

Note: subscription bookings will be cancelled on Friday, March 25 and Monday, March 28. If you still require your subscription booking on Friday, March 25 OR Monday, March 28, call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Note: subscription trips on Sunday, March 27 will not be cancelled. If you do NOT require your subscription trip on Sunday, March 27, please call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to cancel it.

Booking a reservation trip:

- Bookings for Saturday, March 26 start Tuesday, March 22
- Bookings for Sunday, March 27 and Monday, March 28 start Wednesday, March 23
- Bookings for Tuesday, March 29 start Thursday, March 24

Reminder: we cut bookings off at 12 noon the day before.

DATS I-Book

DATS I-Book is a free, online service available for clients, caregivers and family to book, cancel, and view DATS trips (21 hours per day/7 days a week).

If your facility would like to have a DATS representative introduce I-Book to staff and clients please call Community Relations at 780-496-4567 option 4.

<https://datsibook.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/>



DATS Stats - 2015

Overall, 2015 was a great year in terms of service delivery. Here are some key trip statistics:

- Total scheduled: 1,093,224 (YTD 2015), 1,101,778 (2014)
- Total carried: 946,356 (YTD 2015), 943,016 (2014)
- Carried COE: 473,984 (YTD 2015), 466,217 (2014)
- Carried contractor: 472,412 (YTD 2015), 476,799 (2014)
- Unaccommodated #: 15,336 (YTD 2015), 15,241 (2014)
- Unaccommodated %: 1.40% (YTD 2015), 1.36% (2014)
- On time %: 95.5 (YTD 2015), 94.6% (2014)

March 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Can book for: Mar 23 (till noon) March 24, 25, 26	23 Can book for: Mar 24 (till noon) March 25, 26, 27, 28	24 Can book for: Mar 25, 26 (till noon) March 27, 28, 29	25 HOLIDAY No Trip Booking Subscription trips cancelled	26 Can book for: March 27, 28, 29, 30 (till noon)
27 HOLIDAY No Trip Booking Subscription trips NOT cancelled	28 HOLIDAY Subscription trips cancelled	29 Regular booking schedule resumes	30	31	DATS Customer Care 780-496-4567 E-mail / Website DATS@edmonton.ca www.takeETS.com/DATS	

April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

ETS Partner - Dogs With Wings

Edmonton Transit shares something in common with Guide and Service Dogs - both provide individuals with a lifeline to their communities. Partnered together, we can make the difference between having an engaged and productive life. Dogs with Wings (DWW) is a local, fully accredited organization that trains and provides guide dogs for the blind and visually impaired, service dogs for people with physical disabilities, and autism service dogs for children, as well as facility dogs for support programs.

The dog's training (which lasts two years and costs approximately \$40,000) starts at around three days of age. Training is intensive, and includes command responsiveness, body conditioning (for balance on snow and ice, on elevators and escalators, and with people), and other key skills. The dogs are continually evaluated for aptitude and temperament, and are then streamed into more detailed training to assist persons in turning lights on and off, retrieving items dropped or in unreachable (for the person) locations, opening doors, functioning and assisting in restaurants and workplaces, and travelling safely in the community and on ETS.

Edmonton Transit is pleased to support organizations like Dogs with Wings, and of the use of guide dogs and service dogs on DATS and on our buses and LRT trains. These dogs are key to a person getting out in the community and we aim to accommodate them on ETS in a safe, informed, and respectful way.

It's important for all of us to understand that these are not pets, but rather highly trained and dedicated working animals that must maintain their focus and attention. We all - ETS staff, DATS and regular bus operators, and customers - have a responsibility to allow the dogs to carry out their duties in a safe and unimpeded manner.

How can we help? Recognize they are working, and do not touch them or their harnesses or jackets. Offer assistance to the person and wait for a response first, rather than making assumptions about what a person and their dog might need. Do not crowd the dog or impede its ability to assist the person it's teamed with. Ensure that the team of dog and owner is treated with respect, dignity, and understanding.

Chances are you know someone, or have seen someone, with a guide dog or service dog. You may wanted to ask questions about the training or what's it's like to have a service dog. Perhaps you've even wondered what to do or how to behave around the dog. Just ask...learn about what the dog means to them, and how it helps them, and become an advocate for service and guide dogs, just like Edmonton Transit strives to be!

Community Notes

Paralympic Sports Association

PSA is dedicated to enhancing the social, physical and mental health of children and adults with a disability through adapted recreational and sporting activities. Programs include Sledge Hockey, Wheelchair Floor Hockey, Taekwondo, Swimming, Integrated Spin, Golf, Rock Climbing, Cycling, Canoeing and Kayaking and more!

For more information or to register, please contact Sydney at 780-439-8684 or programs@parasports.net

Cerebral Palsy Association

CPAA offers a variety of programming for all ages and abilities. Courses include: art, yoga, music, basic computer skills, cooking, dancing and youth transition program.

For more information or to register, please contact Kim at 1-888-477-8030 or kim@cpalberta.com



Edmonton Transit offers a special summer program every year called Seniors on the Go, which combines google information and instruction with community-based field trips on ETS buses and the LRT for recreational, social, and residential senior's groups. The program helps seniors learn about the many accessible and senior-friendly public transit options, services and features offered by Edmonton Transit in a relaxing and fun way. Seniors become informed and comfortable with using ETS independently, and can confidently add transit to their toolbox of transportation options.

This is our 10th year operating the free program, which runs from May to August. The sessions include information and instruction on our age-friendly features and programs, how to pay fares (and where to find fare products), where to go for trip planning assistance, safety and security tips, and provides a trip to, and information about, popular destinations within our community.

The 2016 program starts in May, and new applications for the program trips will be available at that time. More information will be in the next newsletter, and on the ETS website, or you can call the DATS Customer Care Centre at 780-496-4567.

Team Member Profile: **Santokh Khinda, DATS Operator**

How long have you been at DATS?

I have been working at DATS for 30 years now as an operator. I enjoy helping people with special needs.

What do you like most about your job?

I love driving and meeting people from different cultural backgrounds and the working environment. Also, there is the flexibility to change my schedule when I need.



What do you like to do in your spare time?

In my spare time, I like to go walking. I also enjoy riding my bicycle, and also volunteering for non-profit organizations.

"Santokh has been with DATS for 30 years - he brings a lot of experience to DATS in providing excellent customer service and demonstrates a positive attitude. Santokh has built a great rapport with all our passengers over the years. Thanks for your commitment!" Gary Terris Jr., Operations Supervisor

ETS Notes

ETS Smart Bus

ETS has eight more Smart Bus routes on the road – 35, 37, 39, 47, 70, 125, 126, 130. Customers can get real-time information on these routes using the ETS Live tools...

ETS Live® Bus Finder: find your bus in real-time for Smart Bus routes and look up schedule information and maps for all other routes.

ETS Live® Email &Ride: get real-time departures for Smart Bus routes and scheduled departure times for all other routes sent directly to your desktop or mobile device. Just put the bus stop number in the subject line and email to ETSLive@edmonton.ca

ETS Live® To Go App: Use the free ETS Live To Go app for real time and scheduled transit information on the go. Check out the video on our website at: takeETS.com/LiveToGo



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Please direct

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E-mail Newsletters

Would you like to receive a copy of
the DATS Newsletter by e-mail? Just
send an e-mail to:
dats@edmonton.ca - please put
"DATS Newsletter" in the subject line.
Or call us at 780-496-4567.

Contact DATS

DATS Client Service Centre

780-496-4567

- ▶ To cancel a trip or to check on a
late ride: Press 1
- ▶ To book or change a trip: Press 2
- ▶ To register for DATS: Press 3
- ▶ To submit a commendation,
concern or any other inquiry:
Press 4

Nextalk

780-944-5555

Lost & Found

780-496-1622

E-mail / Website

DATS@edmonton.ca
takeETS.com/DATS

DATS Client Service Centre

Full Service Hours:

*(trip booking, registration,
commendations & concerns)*

Monday to Friday:

7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday:

7:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

DATS Client Service Centre

Outside of Regular Hours:

(trip cancels, checking late ride)

Monday to Thursday:

5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday:

5:00 a.m. to midnight

Saturday:

6:00 a.m. to midnight

Sunday and holidays:

6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

**ETS**

Return undeliverable Canadian address to:

City of Edmonton Transportation Services
Suite 500, Scotia Place
10060 - Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3R8

post office indicia here