



DATS News



Disabled Adult Transit Service
March 2015

ETS Accessibility



Newsletter Note

Did you know? This newsletter can be emailed straight to your inbox. It's the fastest, and the greenest way to stay in touch!

To be added to our email list, contact: dats@edmonton.ca
For newsletter requests, call us at 780-496-4567 (option 4).



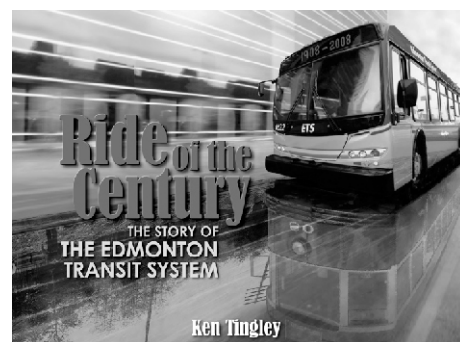
DATS Anniversary - 40 Years!

We are proud to announce that 2015 is the 40th Anniversary of DATS service here in Edmonton. We will be celebrating later in the year – watch for more information!

Contest Announcement

How long have you been riding on DATS? Were you around when DATS rolled into service in 1975? We are looking to share some of your stories and even photos from over the years. If you have a story or memory you would like to share, please let us know. We would love to feature some of your stories in the upcoming 2015 customer newsletters. In return, you will be entered in a random draw for a copy of the *Ride of the Century*.

Ride of the Century - The Story of the Edmonton Transit System is filled with historical and contemporary photos, personal stories, and factual recounting of the history of public transit in Edmonton. Author Ken Tingley, well-known local historian, has masterfully woven the story of Edmonton Transit's development, accomplishments, and innovation over a century into the establishment and growth of this prairie city since its early days at the turn of the 20th century.



Director's Message

As the new Director of DATS, I have been working closely with the management team and connecting with frontline employees to learn as much as possible about our business. My first impressions indicate we have a team of passionate employees and I want to continue to support their dedication to provide excellent service and safely deliver trips to persons with disabilities so they can participate in the community to their full potential.

We as a leadership team are supportive of building a culture of collaborative positive change where all of us are fully engaged in making a difference at DATS. There are nearly 200 employees at DATS; that's a lot of brain power to tap into. Not only do we have terrific staff, we also have the wealth of knowledge from nearly 10,000 customers to work with. We are committed to developing a workforce where decision making and accountability are at the right level. This simply means that all of us are empowered to make a difference at DATS. We will continue to embrace the passion each of us brings to DATS everyday while working in a fun and friendly atmosphere. We are very supportive in a workplace that is innovative, which means we support a learning environment where we challenge the "black and white" thinking, bringing out the creativity of each and every one of us.

Our future success rests on these pillars:

- 1. Building a healthy culture at DATS – through effective communication and a respectful workplace*
- 2. Building a culture of innovation*
- 3. A clear strategic plan with flexible and responsive structure*
- 4. Continuing excellent customer service and focusing on safety*

I am also pleased to welcome Georgina Fairbank as the new Supervisor of Operations and Jessica Noel as the Acting Supervisor of Customer and Client Relations. Now that our management team is in place I am very excited to see how we move forward in supporting DATS.

I realize that our best part of the day is the time we spend at work, so it's so important that we enjoy ourselves, we're all in this together and we're all very proud to be part of something special at DATS. Thank you to all of you for your warm welcome towards me and for your passion and dedication here at DATS.

In summary, I am committed to continuing to support the team here at DATS to provide excellent customer service and ultimately, safe rides on DATS for our customers.

Ralph Brokop,
Director of DATS

Leadership Introductions

Georgina Fairbank is the new Supervisor of Operations. Over the past 10 years, she has held a variety of positions in the not-for-profit and municipal setting. Her experience includes several years of progressively responsible experience in a variety of strategic, human resources and leadership roles. Recently, Georgina has been supporting Edmonton Transit's Leadership Team in the capacity of a Strategic Coordinator.

Jessica Noel is the new Acting Supervisor of Customer and Client Relations. Jessica has been with DATS for two years now as ETS Abilities Consultant, working closely with the registration team on our eligibility and application process, as well as with the Accessibility Coordinator to further the accessibility of ETS. She has a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy and is passionate about accessibility and independence.



Left to right: Doug Tait, Georgina Fairbank, Ralph Brokop, Jessica Noel and Greg Clarke

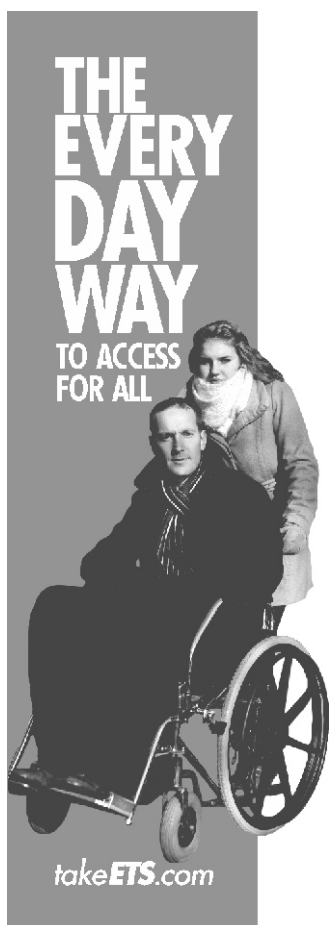
Mobility Choices

Did you know that Edmonton Transit's award-winning customer training program is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year? Stay tuned for more information on plans for the celebration!

In 1995, following the arrival the previous year of Edmonton's new, cutting-edge technology low floor buses, ETS introduced a transit travel training program called Mobility Choices. The program was designed to ensure customers who could benefit from the new features and service would be able to learn how to use them, through hands-on instruction and accompanied trips. The goal of the program was - and remains - to help people with mobility challenges make use of Edmonton Transit, and to provide more choices for independent travel in Edmonton.

This free program is customized to meet the needs of the individual, and can include demonstrations of buses or the LRT, web-based tutorials to learn how to use all of the tools on the ETS website including the online Trip Planner, instruction on use of customer tools and other materials, practice sessions with mobility aids, detailed trip planning assistance, and companioned trips for new customers. 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 ETS Customer Travel Training can do for you, please call our Accessibility Hotline at 780-496-3000, or email us at ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca.



IVR Updates

Soon there will be three ways for you to check on an upcoming ride or cancel a booking: calling by phone (Interactive Voice Response), by text messaging and by email, at no charge. We are still testing these new systems and features so that they are fast and easy to use, and have just completed a pilot project.

Over spring and summer, we will be rolling out these features for all DATS users who wish to use them. Watch your mailboxes for upcoming instructions on how to sign up for the new text messaging and email notifications.

DATS Notes

I-Book

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.

Currently we are working on the following enhancements:

- Ability to book an escort on DATS I-Book
- Updating and uploading training videos to the DATS website
- Decreasing the minimum time between trips from 2.5 hours to 2 hours
- Working with City of Edmonton IT Security Department to ensure using I-Book is safe and secure

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

DATS Calls

All calls to the Customer Care Centre are recorded and monitored for quality assurance and training purposes.



DATS Notes

Pick-up Window

When you book a trip, the DATS Customer Care agent will give you a 30 minute pick-up window. Please:

- Be at the exterior set of accessible doors at the beginning of your pick-up window.
- Allow for up to 90 minutes of travel to get to your destination.

On-time service and customer ride time is affected by DATS operators waiting for customers who are not ready when the vehicle arrives.

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 are unable to ride on DATS. Proper use of a securement system (mobility aids) or seatbelt assembly (ambulatory) is mandatory on DATS.

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 customers. If a safe path is not available, DATS may be unable to provide service until it is cleared.

Holiday Booking Schedule

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Customer Care Centre will be closed) on Good Friday (April 3) and Easter Sunday (April 5). The vehicles will be running as usual.

Note: subscription bookings will be cancelled on Friday, April 3 and Monday, April 6. If you require your subscription booking on Friday, April 3 or Monday, April 6, call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Note: subscription trips on Sunday, April 5 will not be cancelled. If you do NOT require your subscription trip on Sunday, April 5, please call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to cancel it.

- Bookings for Saturday, April 4 start Tuesday, March 31
- Bookings for Sunday, April 5 and Monday, April 6 start Wednesday, April 1
- Bookings for Tuesday, April 7 start Thursday, April 2

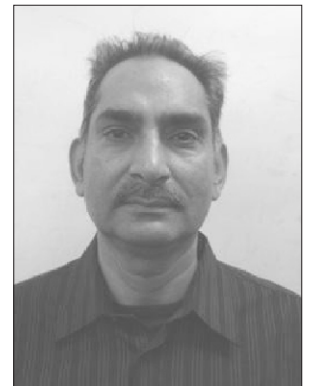
Reminder: we cut trip bookings off at 12 noon the day before.

Team Member Profile

Iftikhar Hussain, Prestige Driver

How long have you been working at DATS?

I have been working at DATS for three years as a contracted Prestige driver. I enjoy working with people, while helping them at the same time. My time spent at DATS is very satisfying! I like assisting individuals, especially seniors.



Can you share more about yourself?

I am from Pakistan - a big town called Kamoke.

I left when I was 20 years old and moved to Dubai, UAE and then on to Houston, Texas before moving to Canada, where I lived in Toronto before moving to Edmonton, Alberta in 2012.

I am also an Associate Engineer. In Dubai, I worked as an electronic technician for 13 years. This work experience has become very valuable while working at Prestige because I am able to provide hands-on technical support working with the Dispatch system and MDTs.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love spending time with my family. We like to have family discussions, and watch television shows from Pakistan together. I also love playing and watching cricket. Of course, my favourite cricket team is Pakistan. Actually, I started playing this great sport in Dubai. But watching my team play against any rival cricket team is even more exciting!

March 2015

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	31 Can book for: April 1 (till noon) April 2, 3, 4	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.			

April 2015

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

DATS Recertification

DATS is continuing to send recertification letters to DATS registrants. Existing registrants are welcome to "self-certify" (complete the forms themselves). If additional information is required, we may request a Health Professional Assessment form be completed. The majority of recertifying registrants will 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 Customer Care (780-496-4567, option 3).

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.
- ▶ 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!



Spring Road Conditions

Spring roads 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 safely.

Note: you 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 an acceptable service standard. Consider this and book a bit earlier to allow extra time to arrive at your destination.

DATS Notes

DATS Stats

Overall, 2014 was a great year in terms of service delivery. Here are some key ridership statistics.

Total rides scheduled:

1,101,778 (2014),
1,114,420 (2013).

Total rides provided:

943,016 (2014),
930,022 (2013).

Rides provided - City Employees:

466,217 (2014),
460,813 (2013).

Rides provided - contractor:

476,799 (2014),
469,209 (2013).

Unaccommodated rides:

15,241 (2014),
11,054 (2013).

Unaccommodated rides:

1.36% (2014),
0.98% (2013).

On time rides %:

94.6% (2014),
93.4% (2013).

SENIORS GO ON THE

Edmonton Transit offers a special summer program every year called Seniors on the Go, which combines ETS instruction with community-based field trips on ETS buses and trains for recreational, social, and residential seniors groups. The program is designed to familiarize seniors with public transit options, services and features to help them become confident independent public transit users.

This is our 9th 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 popular destinations within our community.

The 2015 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 in April and May on the ETS website, or call the DATS Customer Care Centre at 780-496-3600.

Walkers on Edmonton Transit

Walkers are a popular mobility aid for many of our customers, and they make longer outings possible and more stable for those travelling to appointments and for recreational, social and other trips while using public transit.



Here are a few tips to remember on ETS:

- Please be careful when boarding and disembarking from buses and trains. Ensure you are using the ramp when entering or leaving a bus or LRT car, for safer stable access to the vehicle.
- Please use the "priority seating" area on the bus or train if you are using a walker. You are welcome to flip up seats on the buses to make more room for your walker, but be aware and respectful of the needs of other customers with mobility challenges.
- If your walker has brakes, apply them when you are settled in your seat and hold on to your walker for your entire trip. If the bus stops suddenly, the brakes on your walker will not be enough to keep it in place.
- Be considerate of others, and keep your walker out of the aisle. If you can, fold up your walker and hold onto it during your trip.
- Never, ever use your walker as a seat when travelling on the buses or LRT. This is extremely unsafe, and in the event of a sudden stop, there is a significant risk of injury. Bus operators will not allow passengers to sit on their walkers while the bus is in motion.
- If you need assistance with your walker - ask! Your bus driver will be able to provide verbal instructions for boarding and disembarking.



Mobility Choices

Don't forget, ETS also offers the free Mobility Choices Travel Training Program to assist you in learning how to use mobility aids, such as walkers, when travelling on Edmonton Transit - give us a call at 780-496-5788!

DATS News, March 2015

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Please direct comments/submissions to:

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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:
dat@edmonton.ca - please put
"DATS Newsletter" in the subject line.
Or call us at 780-496-4567.

Contact DATS

DATS Customer Care 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

TTY Line 780-496-5506

Nextalk 780-944-5555

Lost & Found 780-496-1622

E-mail / Website DATS@edmonton.ca takeETS.com/DATS

DATS Customer Care 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 Customer Care 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