

DATS News



Disabled Adult Transit Service
May 2015

ETS Accessibility



Online Trip Booking: I-Book

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

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

The number of I-Book users is increasing quickly for this "fast, accurate, and convenient method for DATS bookings" with over 800 registered users.

Note: I-Book is also a convenient option for facilities, where bookings may be made by staff. If your facility would like to have a DATS representative introduce I-Book please call Community Relations at 780-496-4567 option 4.

DATS Anniversary - 40 Years!

On April 28, 2015, we celebrated 40 years of service in Edmonton. We've come a long way!



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).

Director's Message

ETS Accessible Transit has played a role in the lives of our passengers and families for the past 40 years in Edmonton – enabling all citizens to be mobile. As we look forward, we should also take a look back and celebrate our many accomplishments along the way. It all began back in November, 1974 when City Council approved the concept of Disabled Adult Transportation System (DATS). The mandate: to provide an affordable transportation service within the City limits of Edmonton to adults with physical impairments (wheelchair or ambulatory) over the age of 16 who were unable to use regular transit service. DATS provided door-to-door subscription, reservation, and charter service to registrants between the hours of 6:30 am and midnight, seven days a week at 50 cents per trip (1974 prices).



Over the years, DATS has seen some changes. In the 1980s, DATS implemented a Brokerage Demonstration Project in 1985 - DATS handled the scheduling and dispatching of rides with City-owned vehicles. In 1987, operations staff became City of Edmonton Employees. A new business model came in 2004 with a new collective agreement with the DATS drivers (ratified by the City of Edmonton and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 569). Another significant milestone happened in July 31, 2005 - implementation of the new hybrid business model with hourly paid City of Edmonton operators and City owned vehicles and the new DATS supplementary Ambulatory Contract awarded to what is now Prestige Transportation Ltd. In 2006, Percy Wickman Garage officially opened as DATS' new facility.

We have seen a few name changes as well. DATS began with the name "DATS - Disabled Adult Transportation System" in 1974. The name was changed to "Custom Transportation Services" in 1985 and then went back to the original "Disabled Adult Transportation System" in 1993. The name was changed to the current "Disabled Adult Transit Service" in 1998.

As we move forward, we are reviewing the way we do business - existing policies, technologies, operations, customer service and employee relations. We are also committed to continuing to support and develop community accessibility and being a part of the ETS family of services.

We have some updates for our IVR (Interactive Voice Response) and I-Book customers coming soon. We are also working on some improvements and additional functionality for our MDTs (Mobile Data Terminals) on board our vehicles.

Another exciting initiative is our commitment to employee engagement which involves a new age of engaging our staff and operators so we can continue to evolve and utilize the collective knowledge we have at DATS. We have implemented new committees with Operators and office staff as part of our culture of full stakeholder involvement.

In addition to these new initiatives we are also looking for feedback on existing policies from our key stakeholders – including passengers, families and employees. Your input is invaluable to us as we develop our business strategies. We will be asking for your help, so stay tuned.



DATS Recertification

Reminder: Winter conditions ended April 30!

If you have the "Winter Only" condition on your file, you are only able to book trips during wintry conditions, typically November 1 through April 30 (weather permitting). If you have questions or concerns related to DATS conditions, or eligibility in general, please call DATS Registration (780) 496-4567, option 3.

Recertification Questions

February marked one full year since we rolled out the updated DATS recertification process! In case you still have questions, here are some answers to questions from your fellow passengers.

Q: Why do I have to recertify?

All ETS buses, LRT vehicles, and facilities are now accessible, and it's easier to get around in the city. Also, people move, or grow older, and function differently over time, so we need to know what's changed in your life, and if it affects how you use DATS. Plus you get a new picture ID card, so be ready to smile! (We will be asking for updated info again after another five years.)

Q: Why is there an in-person interview now?

An in-person interview helps us learn about your current need for DATS service. Meeting with an independent health professional (an expert in public transportation) is the best way to do this. They ask the right questions to truly understand you, and listen to what you have to say. They will make recommendations to DATS to ensure those who need the service will always have a ride.

Q: Will my DATS status change?

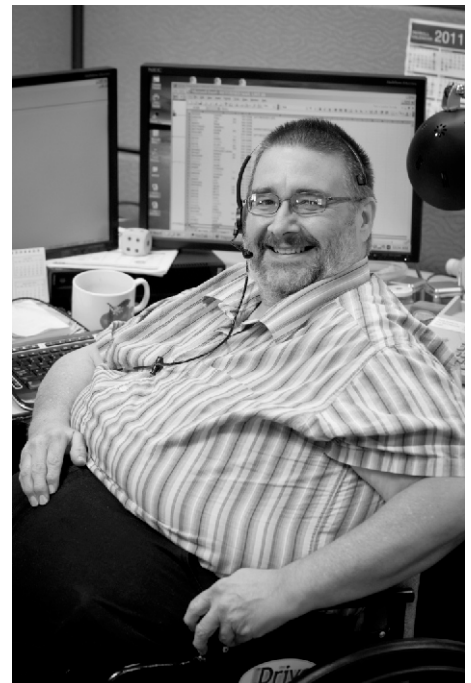
Some customers might see an update in their status, which should match their ability to use the regular ETS system. Rest assured that once we know when you need DATS, you will be eligible to book trips under those conditions.

Q: What if I disagree with the results?

Contact us. We can talk with you about your results and work out ways to help you use public transit safely and more easily. Free training is also available to anyone who wants to become familiar with how to use ETS. If you still disagree with your eligibility conditions, you may request an appeal. You will have the opportunity to present your case to an independent panel of peers.

Q: What do I do if I haven't heard from DATS yet about recertifying?

Sit back and relax! We are contacting current customers gradually. At some point you will get a letter asking you to submit a Self-Recertification Form. Then, if appropriate, we will arrange your interview. We ask that you do not submit a recertification form or book an interview appointment until you hear from us about it.



If you ever have any questions about recertifying or about DATS registration, please call 780-496-4567, option 3.

DATS Notes

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 with select clients.

We will be rolling out these features with 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.

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.

DATS Customer Care
780-496-4567

E-mail / Website / I-Book
DATS@edmonton.ca
www.takeETS.com/DATS
<https://datsibook.gov.edmonton.ab.ca>

Holiday Booking Schedule

Monday, May 18

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Customer Care Centre will be closed) on Victoria Day, Monday, May 18, 2015. The vehicles will be running as usual.

Note: subscription bookings will be cancelled on Monday, May 18, 2015. If you still require your subscription booking on Monday, May 18, 2015, call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Wednesday, July 1

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Customer Care Centre will be closed) on Canada Day, Wednesday, July 1, 2015. The vehicles will be running as usual.

Note: subscription bookings will be cancelled on Wednesday, July 1, 2015. If you still require your subscription booking on Wednesday, July 1, 2015, call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

SENIORS GO ON THE GO

Edmonton Transit's free Seniors on the Go program 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.

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 also include a trip to popular destinations within our community.

The 2015 program starts in May, and new applications for the program trips will be available then. Call 780-944-5593 after May 4 for more information.



May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 Can book for: May 16 (till noon) May 17, 18, 19	16 Can book for: May 17 (till noon) May 18, 19, 20
17 Can book for: May 18,19 (till noon) May 20, 21	18 HOLIDAY No Trip Booking Subscription trips cancelled	19 Regular booking schedule resumes	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 2015

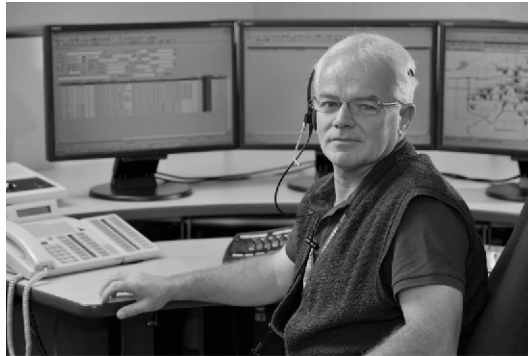
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Can book for: June 28 (till noon) June 29, 30
28 Can book for: June 29 (till noon) June 30, July 1, 2	29 Can book for: June 30 (till noon) July 1, 2, 3	30 Can book for: July 1, 2 (till noon) July 3, 4	July 1 HOLIDAY No Trip Booking Subscription trips cancelled	2 Regular booking schedule resumes	3	4

Team Member Profile

**Steven Gregg,
DATS Scheduler**

How long have you been working at DATS?

I have been working at DATS for 33 years, but am retiring on August 28, 2015! I was in the construction industry before coming to the City of Edmonton.



Why do you like working at DATS?

Working at DATS has given me a chance to work with and meet so many people from different cultural backgrounds and countries! As well, I like learning all the software programs and systems that are implemented over the years.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I enjoy spending time with my wife, daughter, our two dogs and cat. I also really like to take long walks in the rain because it reminds me a lot of my home - I was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. I came to Canada when I was 19.

What are your interests or hobbies?

I love to play golf. Also, I am currently working on and restoring a 2000 Dodge Durango.

Any upcoming vacation plans?

Nothing at the moment but with my upcoming retirement – the world is my oyster!

DATS Notes

Cancelling Your Trip?

Remember - if you are cancelling your trip, please give at least two hours' notice to avoid a no-show.

Did you know? You can cancel multiple trips for a specific period of time, just ask your agent.

Note: the Customer Care Centre 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).

Passenger Safety

DATS is dedicated to the safety of passengers on all trips. Passengers must 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 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.



Service Dogs

The Service Dogs Act gives Albertans with disabilities the right to bring their qualified service dog with them into any public place where people are normally allowed to be. This includes restaurants, taxis, buses, cafes, hospitals, hotels, schools, bars, planes, theatres, recreation centres, etc.

Denying public access to a qualified service dog user could result in a fine of up to \$3,000.

To be considered qualified, the dog must be trained by a school that is accredited by Assistance Dogs International. Certified dog trainers also have public access rights while training a service dog.

Falsely claiming to have a disability in order to get public access for a pet dog or to avoid paying pet fees could result in a fine of up to \$300.

Valid Government ID Card

A Government of Alberta Service Dog ID card is available for qualified service dog users. This ID card grants the holder public access rights under the Service Dogs Act.

If you would like to find out what ETS Customer Travel Training can do for you, if you need customer tools or other materials sent to you, or if you would like to inquire about training sessions, please call our Accessibility Hotline at 780-496-3000, or email us at ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca

DATS Advisory Group (DAG)

Using DATS to attend a Doctor/Dentist appointment or a medical test? Here are some tips to make things a little less stressful:

- When booking your appointment make sure to let them know that you will be traveling by DATS and that that you need an accurate estimate of how long your appointment will take including the time spent in the waiting room so that you can book a return trip pick up time that won't have DATS showing up before you are done or you waiting a long time for your ride home.
- When you check in at your appointment remind them again that you are traveling by DATS and of your pickup time.
- When the Hospital or Clinic requires you to have an escort for medical reasons and you have a 'no escort' condition on your file call DATS option 3 and request a onetime exception before booking your ride.

Bob Macklon, DAG Member

DAG Volunteers Wanted

DAG has immediate openings for two User Representatives positions (must be current DATS registrants). To find out more about joining DAG please contact Shirley Masterson at 780-496-4554 or by emailing: shirley.masterson@edmonton.ca. Note: this is a volunteer position. Here are a few more details:

DATS is looking for motivated individuals to sit on their voluntary advisory committee (DAG) and provide input based on their experience at either using DATS or working with DATS. Members must be residents of Edmonton, or represent organizations based out of Edmonton. DAG requires a monthly commitment. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. A light supper is provided. For members requiring transit or DATS fare to attend, this is arranged as needed.



DATS News, May 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:
dats@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