



DATS

Dedicated Accessible Transit Service

November 2020



DATS User Guide

www.edmonton.ca/DATS

Edmonton
Transit
Service

Edmonton

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Welcome to DATS

This user guide will help you to understand the services available and how to use DATS.

This guide is also available in large print and on our web-site: www.takeETS.com/DATS

DATS Client Services

Call: (780) 496-4567



Press 1 - Cancel a trip or check on a late ride

Press 2 - To book or change a trip

Press 3 - To register for DATS

Press 4 - To submit a commendation, concern or any other general inquiry

Press 5 - IVR Self Serve Options (see page 14)

Press 6 - To request a subscription

Vision

To provide industry leading and sustainable specialized transportation solutions that connect people, resources, and communities.

Mission

To provide customer focused, safe, and reliable door-to-door shared ride services for those who are unable to use conventional transit.

Values

Safety, Respect, Customer Service, Compassion, Teamwork.

What is DATS

DATS is a door-to-door public transportation service for Edmontonians who cannot use regular transit for some or all of their travel needs, due to a physical or cognitive impairment.

DATS is a shared-ride public transportation service operating within the City of Edmonton corporate limits and the ETS service area. Wheelchair lift equipped vehicles, minivans, accessible minivans, taxis and vans are used to provide DATS service. Vehicles used are clearly identified as "DATS" vehicles.

DATS clients must apply, meet eligibility requirements and be registered before using DATS services.

DATS is administered and scheduled by the DATS section of ETS (Edmonton Transit System). The DATS budget is supported primarily from the City of Edmonton tax levy. Cost of the service is partially offset with fares collected from the DATS users. Trips are scheduled to make maximum use of this shared ride service while staying within budget.

Note: DATS may not meet all travel needs. When a higher level of service is required, there are private wheelchair accessible services available in the community, call (780) 496-4567 (option 4) for information.

Who can use DATS

DATS service is available to residents of Edmonton who cannot use regular transit for some or all trips because of a physical and/or cognitive disability. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis, following specific guidelines, and a registration process.

Youth Service

Service for non-educational trips is available to youth who cannot use regular transit because of a physical and/or cognitive disability.

Temporary Service

A temporary registration number may be available for individuals temporarily disabled for the period they cannot use conventional transit as a travel option.

Visitor Service

Persons with disabilities visiting Edmonton may be provided with a temporary visitor registration number upon receipt of a DATS application form.

Note: If you have questions about DATS eligibility, contact us at (780) 496-4567, Option 3 . For other inquiries use Option 4.

DATS Registration

Applicants must apply, meet eligibility requirements and be registered before they can book a DATS trip. DATS service is intended for people who are unable to use regular transit due to a physical or cognitive disability for some or all trips.


Each application for DATS registration is carefully reviewed to evaluate eligibility. Eligibility is approved only for those times or specific trips when the applicant is unable to use regular transit.

When you call to register, we will confirm which forms to send to you. Forms can be mailed, emailed or faxed.

Application forms must be completed and signed by you (or your guardian) and a qualified health care practitioner and returned to DATS. Once the application is received with all necessary information completed, it is processed.

If the applicant meets eligibility guidelines, a registration number and card is issued and a registration package is mailed out.

Note: applicants may be sent for a personal interview as part of the eligibility process to help DATS determine their specific needs.

To register for DATS, 
call (780) 496-4567 (option 3).

Eligibility on DATS

Each application is carefully reviewed to evaluate eligibility for travel on DATS. Applicants are advised of any conditions on their eligibility and the terms of use at the time of registration. Some examples of eligibility conditions may include 'winter only', 'dark only' and 'no escort'.

Note: All phone calls to Client Services are monitored and recorded for training and quality assurance purposes.

Privacy Policy

Application information is collected under the authority of Section 33 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) and is used to determine eligibility for DATS.

Information collected on the application form may be used by ETS for statistical, research, or to improve service. It is protected by the privacy provisions of the FOIP Act. You must provide consent to disclose your information to health service contractors as required for the registration process. If you do not consent to the disclosure, your application cannot be processed. Contact registration at (780) 496-4567 (option 3) for more information.

Booking a Trip

Trips are accommodated based on availability and can be booked up to three days in advance. If you are calling to book a trip for the following day, call DATS Client Services before 12:00 noon.

When you call, you will be asked:

- your DATS registration number
- what day you wish to travel
- the exact address for your pick up and drop off (name of location - business/facility, etc.)
- the time of day you wish to travel
- if you use a wheelchair or mobility aid
- if you wish to book a return trip

The Client Services agent will confirm the trip by repeating it back to you to ensure that all the information is correct. Please listen carefully to ensure we are correct.

Here's how it works. For...

Monday trips: Call Friday, Saturday (any time), or Sunday (before noon)

Tuesday trips: Call Saturday, Sunday (any time), or Monday (before noon)

Wednesday trips: Call Sunday, Monday (any time), or Tuesday (before noon)

Thursday trips: Call Monday, Tuesday (any time), or Wednesday (before noon)

Friday trips: Call Tuesday, Wednesday (any time), or Thursday (before noon)

Saturday trips: Call Wednesday, Thursday or Friday (before noon)

Sunday trips: Call Thursday, Friday, or Saturday (before noon)

Stat Holidays: Call an additional day in advance

Booking Online

DATS I-Book is an online service that offers self-service options for reservation trip bookings, trip cancellations, viewing trips, and more. I-Book is available online 21 hours a day, 7 days a week (7:30am - 12:00am):

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



For more information or to register for DATS I-Book, please call Client Services at (780) 496-4567 (option 4). Subscription trips can be requested or cancelled by calling the Client Services Centre.

Fax Bookings

Requests for Reservation, Subscription, and Group trips can be faxed to DATS. You can also cancel or change your trips by fax.

Note: fax bookings for large groups are accepted up to 10 days ahead.

DATS fax: (780) 496-1008.

DATS Tip: Check the fax form carefully. If you are missing information your request may not be processed. Confirmation is sent in a return fax. If you don't receive confirmation, call (780) 496-4567, (option 2). You must receive a confirmation fax for your trip to be guaranteed.

Reservation Trips

Reservation trips are for occasional or casual trips and are booked on a 'first come, first served' basis. Reservation trips can be booked (based on availability) starting three days in advance up until noon the day before your trip. If we cannot accommodate the time requested, we will offer alternate times.

DATS Tip: Plan your travel during off-peak times when there are more trips available when possible. Peak times are on weekdays (7:00 to 10:00am and 2:00 to 5:00pm) - more trips are requested during these times.

Same-Day (On-Demand) Trips

These trips are requested on the same day the client wishes to travel. Same-Day requests must be made at least two hours prior to the requested departure time. We are only able to accommodate a limited number of trips on the day of service (to fill in gaps in our service, or because others have cancelled advanced bookings).

These trips are not guaranteed - they depend on the vehicle capacity and whether your trip fits on a previously scheduled route.

DATS Tip: The more notice we have, the better the chance we can find you a trip.

Subscription Trips

Subscription trips go from the same place to the same destination at the same time and on the same day of the week, repeating regularly, for a minimum of six weeks.

Subscription requests can be made by fax, email or by calling (780) 496-4567 (Option 6) daily between 12:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Subscription requests may take some time to be approved, based on trip availability. Subscriptions can run as long as they are needed.

Call (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to cancel a subscription trip as soon as you are aware of any changes to the subscription, or if you need to temporarily cancel. Frequent cancellations may affect a client's subscription booking privileges. Group trips are for three or more clients

Group Trips

traveling from the same location to the same destination, traveling at the same time.

Group trips must be booked three to six days in advance. For large groups (10 or more), 6 to 10 days notice is preferred.

Only a limited number of group bookings can be accommodated and we cannot guarantee everyone in your group will be on the same vehicle.

Tip: Group trips may not be available during peak periods. Consider booking between 10:00am and 2:00pm, or for evenings and weekends as more trip space is available.

Trip Cancellation

Cancellations must be made at least two hours in advance. There is high demand for DATS service. Please contact DATS promptly to cancel any trips - your cancellation saves making an unnecessary trip and may allow another client to book a trip.

If you need to cancel your DATS trip, call (780) 496-4567 (option 1). Trips cancelled less than two hours before the scheduled pick-up time are recorded as a “no-show”.

Cancellations: (780) 496-4567 (option 1)

Note: Frequent late cancellations and no-shows may affect trip booking privileges.

Trip Changes

Adjusting a Trip

If you need to adjust your trip, call Client Services at (780) 496-4567 (option 2) prior to noon the day before your travel date. Help us provide better service to others by calling as soon as you know if you need to adjust a trip.

During your trip, you can ask the operator for a change of destination close to your original location and we **may** be able to accommodate that change. DATS service standards must be maintained and other clients must not be negatively affected.

DATS Fares

All ETS fare products are accepted on DATS:

- Cash fare (exact change only)
- ETS transit ticket
- ETS monthly pass
- U-Pass (post-secondary passes)
- Senior monthly pass
- Senior annual pass
- Senior annual low income pass
- Senior transit ticket
- ETS Day Pass
- Ride Transit pass
- CNIB card

Cash fares and tickets are collected by the operator at the door of your pick-up location prior to boarding. Clients must show a valid pass to the operator for every trip.

Passes and tickets are available at ETS sales outlets: call 311, or visit takeETS.com

DATS is not responsible for fares paid to other transportation providers when DATS is unable to pick up an individual, during the pre-arranged pick-up window due to vehicle breakdown or traffic conditions. DATS will try to make alternative arrangements when feasible.

DATS Tip: Companions travelling with a fare paying DATS client on regular ETS services do not pay a fare. Clients should carry their DATS registration card and show it to the ETS operator upon request when taking along a free escort on ETS.

Statutory Holiday Bookings

Subscription Trips are typically cancelled on all Statutory Holidays (with the exception of Easter Sunday) and over the Christmas and New Year's season.

For holiday booking schedules and cancellations, call Client Services or check the DATS Newsletter on the DATS website at: www.takeETS.com/DATS

DATS Trip Availability

While DATS attempts to provide service for all client requests, not all trips may be accommodated due to budget constraints and increasing demand for service.

Clients are encouraged to plan travel during off peak hours or consider alternatives such as ETS' accessible low-floor or community buses, LRT or private means of transportation when possible.

For more information about Edmonton Transit services, call 311 or visit: www.takeETS.com or call the ETS Mobility Choices at (780) 496-3000.

Riding on DATS

Pick-up Window

When will your ride come?

When you book a trip, the agent will give you a 30 minute pick-up window. **You must be ready at the first set of exterior accessible doors at the beginning of your pick-up window.** Your trip may arrive any time within the pick-up window.

On-time service and client ride-time is affected by operators waiting for clients who are not ready when the vehicle arrives. Please be courteous to fellow passengers.

Note: Operators do not buzz in at buildings or search for clients who are not ready at the exterior doors during a scheduled pick-up window.

No-Shows

A client is considered a “no-show” when:

- The operator arrives at the scheduled time and pick-up location and is unable to locate the client, or
- The client cancels at the door, or
- The client cancels with less than two hours before the scheduled pick-up time.

DATS vehicles wait for a maximum of five minutes upon arrival within the scheduled pick-up window. If you are not ready during this five minute period, your trip is recorded as a “no-show” in your client file, and remaining trips that day are cancelled unless you contact us. “No-shows” are recorded in the client's file. Frequent no-shows will be reviewed and may affect client trip booking privileges.

IVR (Interactive Voice Response)

IVR includes an automated phone system, which can call or text ahead to let you know a trip is on its way, as well as check on your next pickup time.

For some IVR features, you must have a client ID and a numerical passcode, which can also be used to access I-book (pg 7). If you do not have a passcode, one can be sent to you via mail.

With additional features, DATS Clients can call in to the automated messaging system to:

- Check on the status of an upcoming trip (within 90 minutes)
- Summarize trips over the next three days
- Cancel a trip

Clients can also set up automated text messaging to:

- Get an estimated pickup time for a trip (within 90 minutes)
- Receive text-ahead notifications of an upcoming trip

For more information about IVR features, ask Client Services the next time you call, or visit the “*Riding on DATS*” page of edmonton.ca/DATS for instructions.

Additionally, call Community Relations at (780) 496-4567 (Option 4) or email dats@edmonton.ca for more information on how to use IVR.

DATS Operator Assistance

Operators assist clients with:

- Positioning their mobility aid on the vehicle lift.
- Safely securing mobility aids to the floor of the DATS vehicle.
- Correctly securing the shoulder strap/lap belt.
- Getting on and off DATS vehicles.
- Getting to and from the vehicle and inside the first set of accessible doors.

Note: If you have questions, or want to schedule a ramp or equipment assessment by a DATS Operations Supervisor, please contact us at (780) 496-4567 (option 4).

Operators DO NOT:

- Make repairs or adjustments to mobility aids.
- Help with parcels or baggage, so limit possessions to those you can carry or travel with an attendant who can assist you.
- Enter your premises under any circumstances.
- Lift wheelchairs or scooters up or down stairs. All wheelchairs and scooters must be at ground level when the Operator arrives, unless you have a DATS approved ramp.
- Assist clients with transferring from a scooter to a seat.

DATS Safety Standards

Mandatory Attendants

A mandatory attendant may be required when a client needs individual assistance on the vehicle due to a certain medical condition and/or behavioural concern. Mandatory attendants are not required to pay a fare.

Note: once clients are assigned 'MA', they are not able to book any trips for travel without a mandatory attendant. Clients who require a mandatory attendant must request the designation prior to booking (at registration or by contacting Client Services).

Mandatory attendant status is not assigned to clients needing assistance at their destinations.

Etiquette on DATS

DATS follows etiquette for all ETS vehicles and properties, in line with City of Edmonton Bylaw 8353. Behaviours that negatively affect other clients and/or the operator are not acceptable and may be grounds for temporary or permanent cancellation of DATS privileges or the assignment of a mandatory attendant.

For more information about ETS etiquette, visit edmonton.ca.

Note: If the client cannot be left alone, someone must be available to receive the client when the vehicle arrives.

DATS Safety Standards

Location Accessibility

- All pick-up and drop-off locations for DATS must be accessible.
- For the safety of operators and clients, all locations must be free of snow and ice.
- Confirm your pick-up and drop-off locations are accessible before booking.
- Temporary or portable ramps may not be acceptable. All ramps must be assessed by DATS and deemed safe for DATS service.

DATS Tip: Funds may be available (government/private sources) for permanent wheelchair ramps and other aids. Call us at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) for information.

Passenger Safety

Correct use of a securement safety system (mobility aids) and seat belt assemblies (passenger) is mandatory and a condition of use while travelling on DATS.

All clients are required to wear a seatbelt/shoulder strap, unless they have a medical exemption letter on file that has been signed by a doctor. The Province of Alberta has specific requirements which ETS must follow regarding seatbelt exemptions for medical reasons; these letters must be updated annually.

Clients traveling with a scooter or a transport chair must transfer to a seat for all DATS

DATS Service Standards

Travel Distance

Trip booking requests for very short distances may not be accommodated unless there are special circumstances such as construction or physical barriers interfering with pedestrian accessibility or a lack of sidewalks in the area. DATS only operates within the City of Edmonton, where ETS provides service.

Note: DATS is committed to the safety of both clients and operators. Decisions regarding potential travel on DATS will be based on many factors, which include service standards, equipment, vehicle, location and other travel considerations.

Vehicle Assignment

Trips are assigned to vehicles (by software and scheduling agents) to provide the most cost effective solution that meets a client's travel requirements. As a shared-ride service with specific space and time requirements, we may be unable to accommodate specific vehicle types or seating assignment requests.

Note: DATS is not intended to provide emergency medical services. If you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 to request assistance.

DATS Service Standards

Service/Assistance Animals

Dogs trained to aid or to guide persons with visual, hearing or other disabilities are permitted on ETS vehicles, including DATS.

Service dogs traveling on DATS must be:

- Trained by an ADI (Assistance Dogs International) accredited organization
- Trained by a school or successfully tested as per the Alberta Service Dogs Act
- Have training ID provided through the Government of Alberta Service ID card program, and wear a service vest and harness

Pets or other service animals are not allowed on DATS. Clients wishing to travel with pets must arrange for other transportation.

Infants and Small Children

Infants and small children under 18kg or 40lbs must travel in a child seat with a label or sticker of compliance showing it meets the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards Act (CMVSS Section 213).

Note: DATS cannot accommodate strollers on vehicles and does not provide child safety seats. Operators are not required to handle children or child seats. Securement of children is the parent or guardian's responsibility.

Mobility Aids

All wheelchairs, walkers, and scooters must meet the specific safety guidelines for DATS travel. If an operator cannot properly secure your mobility aid then we are unable to provide service.

- Combined weight of the mobility aid and client cannot exceed 750 lbs (340 kg)
- Maximum base dimensions for equipment is: 30 x 50 inches (76 x 127 cm) - larger equipment cannot be accommodated
- Wheelchairs must have escort handles
- Equipment must have functioning brakes
- Operators must be able to securely fasten the tie-downs to the frame of the mobility aid, or mobility aids may need attachments so they can be safely secured to the vehicle

- If you are using a scooter, you must transfer to a seat
- Wheelchairs and scooters must be in good condition (no sharp edges or pieces coming off) and clean at all times

If you are buying new equipment, contact Client Services first to confirm it can be safely secured on ETS vehicles, including DATS.

DATS Tip: Call (780) 496-4570 (option 4) to ask for a copy of our mobility aid guidelines or visit our web-site at www.takeETS.com. Or call ETS Mobility Choices Accessibility at (780) 496-3000.



Commendations and Concerns

Happy with the service you are getting, or have a comment or suggestion about DATS? Please call DATS Community Relations at (780) 496-4567 (option 4).

If you have a commendation or concern, report it as soon as possible with your name, client number, contact details, and complete trip information. This helps DATS follow up in a timely manner.

DATS listens carefully to concerns and makes every attempt to address, investigate, and resolve service issues as quickly as possible. To contact us, call (780) 496-4567 (option 4), email us at dats@edmonton.ca, or complete our on-line form at takeETS.com/DATS

Communication

DATS produces a variety of communication tools for clients and caregivers:

- Client Newsletter (four times per year): includes articles, information about special events, holiday booking schedules, and more. Available online, in regular print, large print, audio CD, or via e-mail
- Paper and digital brochures
- Visit our website at edmonton.ca/DATS for information on policies and services, or to read or download brochures

Tip: If you would like more information or a brochure mailed or emailed to you, call (780) 496-4567 (option 4) or email us at dats@edmonton.ca

Lost and Found

All articles left on Edmonton Transit property are sent to ETS Lost and Found the next working day. If you left something on a DATS vehicle, or on the bus or LRT, call (780) 496-1622, after noon the next day to see if your lost item was handed in.

ETS Lost and Found is located at the Edmonton Service Centre (Edmonton Tower, 10111-104 Avenue). It is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and closed on Statutory Holidays.

DATS Advisory Group (DAG)

The DATS Advisory Group (DAG) offers advice to Edmonton Transit System in the planning and operation of DATS, and in the development of transportation policies and programs that affect persons with disabilities.

There are twelve members, each appointed for a two-year term. DAG has six registrants, five persons representing agencies and one community-at-large representative who may be appointed for special needs.

For more information on DAG, call Client Services at (780) 496-4567 (option 4), or visit our website: edmonton.ca/DATS

ETS Accessible Services

Edmonton Transit is committed to providing safe, accessible, reliable transportation to all of our customers, with barrier-free services, programs and features that make public transit easy and convenient for everyone.

ETS Travel Training - Mobility Choices

ETS provides a free training program for seniors and persons with disabilities on how to safely and confidently use ETS. Training is available for agency staff or others who work with seniors or persons with disabilities.

Call ETS Travel Training (Mobility Choices) at (780) 496-3000, or email us at ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca for more information.

Customer Tools

- ETS Mobility Card is designed to alert operators of arriving buses that the customer needs to use the ramp ("R") or have the bus kneel ("K").
- ETS Bus Hailer Kit indicates to the bus operator which bus route the passenger is waiting for. This is particularly helpful for passengers with decreased vision.
- Customer Communication Cards are available to help passengers who have difficulty expressing their transit/trip needs to the bus operator.

These products are available free of charge; call (780) 496-3000 for more information.

DATS Hours

DATS Vehicles Operate:

Monday to Thursday: 6:00am to 11:00pm

Friday: 6:00am to midnight

Saturday: 6:30am to midnight

Sunday and Holidays: 6:30am to 11:00pm

Client Service Centre:

Monday to Friday: 7:30am to 5:00pm

Saturday & Sunday: 7:30am to 12:00 noon

Outside of Regular Hours

(trip cancellations, checking on a late ride)

Monday to Thursday: 5:00am to 11:00pm

Friday: 5:00am to midnight

Saturday: 6:00am to midnight

Sunday & holidays: 6:00am to 11:00pm

Contact Information



Client Service Centre (780) 496-4567

Press 1 - Cancel a trip or check on a late ride

Press 2 - To book or change a trip

Press 3 - To register for DATS

Press 4 - To submit a commendation, concern or any other inquiry

Press 5 - IVR Self Serve Options (pg 14)

Press 6 - Subscription Requests

Nextalk: (780) 944-5555

DATS e-mail: dats@edmonton.ca

DATS I-Book:

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

ETS Customer Service: 311

BusLink: (780) 496-1600

Lost and Found: (780) 496-1622