



# DATS News



**Disabled Adult Transit Service**  
July 2019

## DATS NEWSLETTER

DATS Client Services will be contacting clients in July/August to survey what type of DATS Newsletter they receive (regular print, large print, digital or audio).

If you'd like to change the way you receive DATS News, whether it's via mail, email, or as an audio CD, you can let us know now. Ask the next time you call (780) 496-4567, or send us an email at [dats@edmonton.ca](mailto:dats@edmonton.ca).

## DATS Dispatch

The Dispatch team at DATS is an important component of service deployment. They are the lifeline for our Operators on the road, make quick decisions when schedules need to make sudden changes, and make sure our clients are on time and safe on the road.

Using our trip scheduling software and a number of communication tools, individual dispatchers:

- Monitor vehicles, juggling trips if necessary to account for cancellations, weather, construction, traffic and other sudden surprises
- Message Operators via their MDTs (Mobile Data Terminals) or over the radio
- Take emergency calls from Operators
- Coordinate resources, like our Operations Supervisors and ETS surface control when called for
- Contact clients after call centre hours when necessary.

Our Dispatch team is highly trained and is integral to DATS running smoothly.

To learn more about our Dispatch team, see page 5.

# Manager's Message

On June 24th DATS delivered a report to City Council, as requested last year, which outlined several planned customer service improvements.

These planned initiatives include:

## New Service Model

DATS will begin using trained taxi drivers to provide DATS shared-ride service when needed to help better manage demand for trips on a daily basis. These vehicles will be private taxi vehicles, but will have a DATS logo decal attached. We will be working with our contractors to integrate our systems and provide training with the aim to implement the service model over the next year.

## Contractor Training

Currently, roughly half of DATS trips are provided by contractors in minivans and accessible minivans. This is also being expanded to include taxis. We will be developing a consistent training program for all DATS contractors to ensure a safe, reliable, customer-focused service.

## Contract Management

DATS has hired a new position that will be responsible for ensuring all contracted service meets our high level of customer service standards. This includes monitoring the service, training and quality control.

## Technology Enhancements

This includes enhanced automation of our current scheduling software to improve routing and service efficiency, and expanded real-time information with automated ride notifications, based on vehicle GPS location. We will also be exploring the potential for an app for expected pickup and arrival times in consultation with other municipal transit agencies.

## Exploring Partnerships with Alternative Transportation Providers

We will be looking at technology options to provide a single point of contact to access multiple forms of accessible transportation, including conventional transit trip planning, DATS, taxis and accessible taxis, and other community accessible transportation providers.



### Appointment Times

DATS will be offering the option for trip booking with either a pickup window or a drop-off window. For trips booked with a drop-off window our scheduling system will then determine a pickup window to help ensure appointment times are met. We plan to implement this within two years.

### Distance-Based Ride Times

DATS plans to change from a maximum 90-minute ride time for all trips to maximum ride times that are based on trip distance. This would improve consistency of ride times and customer service.

### Continuous Customer Feedback

Over the next year, we plan to offer customer journey mapping and implement customer satisfaction surveys to ensure we understand evolving challenges and opportunities to improve service.

All of these initiatives were developed in consultation with DATS users and stakeholders. If you have any questions about these initiatives please contact the DATS Community Relations team at (780) 496-4567 (Option 4).

We look forward to these initiatives and serving you better.



Paul Schmold  
Manager Paratransit

## DATS Notes

### **DATS Re-certification**

The next cycle of DATS re-certification which was originally slated to start in early 2019, have been pushed into 2020, to align with the Bus Network Redesign and the overall Transit Strategy.

Clients who were scheduled to be re-certified in 2019 will begin re-certification in 2020 instead. Current ID cards are still valid.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

### **Cancellations**

Please let DATS know as soon as you can if you wish to cancel a trip or subscription booking. This can open up a trip for someone else, and with trip demand at an all-time high, we appreciate the advance notice.

### **DATS Calls**

All calls to the Client Service Centre are recorded and monitored for quality assurance and training purposes.

### **Dogs on DATS**

Certified service and guide dogs are allowed on DATS vehicles of all types. If you have any questions about service or guide dogs on public transit, please contact the community relations team at (780) 496-4567 (Option 4).

## July/August Event Schedule

Festival season continues throughout the summer in Edmonton. Here is a short list of events in July and August held at various venues throughout our city.

### Freewill Shakespeare Festival - June 18 - July 14 - Hawrelak Park

This year, enjoy *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *The Winter's Tale* at the Heritage Amphitheatre in Hawrelak Park. Visit [freewillshakespeare.com](http://freewillshakespeare.com) for tickets and showtimes.

### Edmonton International Street Performers Festival - July 5 - 14 - Old Strathcona

Performers from around the world unleash their street acts for ten days in Old Strathcona. Visit [edmontonstreetfest.com](http://edmontonstreetfest.com) for more information.

### A Taste of Edmonton - July 18 - 28 - Capital Plaza

Sample the culinary delights of Edmonton's food scene, with dishes from 60 local restaurants and food trucks. Visit [tasteofedm.ca](http://tasteofedm.ca) to whet your appetite.

### K-Days - July 19 - 28 - Northlands

Rides, games, food, music and adventure, with the famous K-Days parade downtown kicking off the events at Northlands. Visit [k-days.com](http://k-days.com) for details.

### Heritage Festival - August 3 - 5 - Hawrelak Park

Celebrate your heritage and travel around the world without leaving Hawrelak Park. Plan your weekend at [heritage-festival.com](http://heritage-festival.com).

### Edmonton Folk Music Festival - August 8 - 11 - Gallagher Park

Four days of folk, food and friends at Edmonton's largest outdoor music festival. Featuring world-renowned acts at Gallagher Park, visit [edmontonfolkfest.org](http://edmontonfolkfest.org) for details.

### Edmonton Fringe Festival- August 15 - 25 - Old Strathcona and beyond

Experience live theatre performances throughout Edmonton at North America's largest Fringe Festival. Explore the Fringe at [fringetheatre.ca](http://fringetheatre.ca).

### Edmonton Rock Music Festival - August 16 - 17 - Hawrelak Park

Presented by the Rock and Roll Society of Edmonton at Hawrelak Park, tickets and more are at [edrock.ca](http://edrock.ca).

### Edmonton Blues Festival- August 23 - 25 - Hawrelak Park

The music continues at Heritage Amphitheatre at Hawrelak Park, hosting the best of the world's Blues musicians for one hot weekend in August. Visit [bluesinternationaltd.com](http://bluesinternationaltd.com) for information.





## DATS Dispatch

Dispatcher cubicles always seem like the busiest desks at Percy Wickman Garage: various screens flicker with maps and schedules, with radio and phone lines constantly blinking. Each issue, we hope to highlight a different section at DATS, and this month we asked our Team Lead of Dispatch, Terry McConville, a few quick questions about the work they do.



*What are some of the challenges working as a part of the DATS Dispatch team?*

Terry McConville: Our dispatch team is a group of quick-change artists. They have to make on-the-fly decisions about dozens of vehicles throughout the day, and keep track of hundreds of clients an hour. We have to keep our eye on traffic, weather, construction, special events, vehicle problems and other emergencies. The technology we have helps us juggle these things, but it takes strong multitasking and communication skills to be a dispatcher.

*What does an average day look like?*

TM: No two days are the same. Scheduling will provide each bus with a route in the morning, but on the day of service things can change very quickly with clients cancelling trips, gaps opening up in the schedule and on-demand trips being added. We're there to help smooth those changes as they happen. On any given day we may also have emergency situations which need immediate attention. We're there for our clients and our operators.

*What are some of the rewards to being on this team?*

TM: Our team is very proud of the work we do. At the end of the day, we can look at the number of trips we helped deliver and there's a sense of pride. Even our newest members understand that they are making a difference, helping Edmontonians get to their destinations safely.

## DATS Notes, cont.

### **Registering for Summer Travel on DATS?**

We often get last minute, urgent requests for registration in the summer months, but unfortunately, we are unable to "rush" any application.

Please allow enough time to have forms processed if there is a special summer event coming up or a new need to book DATS trips.

### **Summer Vacation?**

Don't forget to cancel any unwanted trips while you are away!

You can cancel multiple trips for a specific period of time; just ask your booking agent. 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 cancellations, call (780) 496-4567 (Option 1).

### **Purchasing New Equipment?**

Not all mobility aids are suitable for DATS vehicles. All equipment, whether walkers, manual, or electric wheelchairs, must meet size and safety requirements to be used on DATS vehicles.

If you are purchasing new equipment, or have questions about current equipment, please contact DATS at (780) 496-4567, (Option 4) or email [dats@edmonton.ca](mailto:dats@edmonton.ca).

## Community Events

### **Mass for People with Special Needs sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Alberta/NWT State Council**



Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church 2707 34 Street

Friday, August 9, 2019  
1pm to 4:30pm

Fully accessible for all people with Special Needs (speech & hearing impaired, people with electric wheelchairs, walkers, manual wheelchairs, scooters)

Mass from 1pm to 2pm, talk and fellowship from 2pm to 4:30pm

PLEASE BOOK YOUR DATS TRIPS ACCORDINGLY, UP TO 3 DAYS IN ADVANCE

Any questions or concerns contact Brother Francis "Smiley" Lajeunesse at (780) 991- 8776 or email [massforspecialneeds2019@gmail.com](mailto:massforspecialneeds2019@gmail.com)

## **Holiday Booking Schedule**

### **Canada Day 2019**

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Client Services Centre will be closed) on:

- Canada Day, Monday, July 1

Note: Subscription bookings will be cancelled:

- Canada Day, Monday, July 1

If you still require your subscription booking call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

### **Civic Holiday 2019**

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Client Services Centre will be closed) on:

- Civic Holiday, Monday, August 5

Note: Subscription bookings will be cancelled:

- Civic Holiday, Monday, August 5

If you still require your subscription booking call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.



## July 2019

| Sunday | Monday   | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
|        | 1 HOLIDAY<br>Canada Day<br><br>Client Services<br>Centre Closed<br><br>Subscription<br>trips cancelled | 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        |          |        |          |

## August 2019

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday  | Saturday   |
|---|---|--|-----------|----------|---|--|
|   |   |  |           | 1        | 2<br>Can book for:<br>August 3 (till<br>noon)<br>August 4, 5, 6 | 3<br>Can book for:<br>August 4, 5, 6,<br>7 (till noon) |
| 4<br>Can book for:<br>August 5, 6, 7,<br>8(till noon) | 5 HOLIDAY<br>Civic Holiday<br><br>Client Services<br>Centre Closed<br><br>Subscription<br>trips cancelled | 6<br>Regular<br>booking<br>schedule<br>resumes | 7         | 8        | 9   | 10   |
| 11  | 12  | 13   | 14        | 15       | 16  | 17   |
| 18  | 19  | 20   | 21        | 22       | 23  | 24   |
| 25  | 26  | 27   | 28        | 29       | 30  |  |

## DATS News, July 2019

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### Please direct comments/submissions to:

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Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2X3  
Phone: (780) 496-4567  
Fax: (780) 496-1008  
Edmonton Transit Service:  
www.takeETS.com  
E-mail: [dat@edmonton.ca](mailto:dat@edmonton.ca)

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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](mailto:dat@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](mailto:DATS@edmonton.ca)  
[takeETS.com/DATS](http://takeETS.com/DATS)

### DATS Client Service Centre

Trip Booking:

Monday to Friday:

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

Saturday and Sunday:

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

Registration, Commendations,  
Concerns

Monday to Friday:

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### 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:

**DATS**  
**Percy Wickman Garage**  
**5610 86 Street NW**  
**Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2X3**

post office indicia here