

accessability

Transportation services for people with disabilities

Access Calgary Driver Training update



In response to customer concerns about consistency in service delivery, Access Calgary requested the American Public Transit Association (APTA) to conduct a peer review of our service provider training materials. APTA is a highly regarded professional organization that works with transit agencies around the world. As per their

recommendation, Access Calgary undertook the task of developing a standardized Access Calgary Driver Training Program in collaboration with our transportation service providers. We have been working with Calgary HandiBus Association and Southland Transportation, the Access Calgary Advisory Committee, staff and customers over the past eight months to develop the materials required to improve consistency and understanding of how best to serve customers. This past September, trainers from both companies were introduced to the training program that they will deliver to drivers. Based on the initial feedback, the new Access Calgary Driver Training Program will go a long way to improving consistency in service delivery to customers.




Calgary Transit's Mission
is to provide safe,
accessible and courteous
public transportation service
in response to the needs
of our customers.

Calgary Transit

Is your information correct?

For your safety and to help us provide service efficiently, please let Access Calgary know when there are any changes to your personal information, such as emergency contact, mobility

aid, address or phone number. Call **403-537-7770**, and an agent will be happy to update your file. Ensuring this information is current will help us provide better service to you!

We're listening! If you have any questions or feedback, please contact us at **403-537-7777** and press option 4.

calgarytransit.com
call 403-262-1000

Calgary Transit



THE CITY OF
CALGARY

Onward! By 2020, 100 per cent of the transit fleet will be accessible to all Calgarians.

Access Calgary's Ryan Yeadon "drops" 375 feet for Easter Seals



Upon reaching the ground, Ryan had a smile a city block long. "I'd like to do that again, but add another 100 feet."

Ryan raised over \$2,000 for Easter Seals. Funds go to support programs like Easter Seals Camp Horizon in Kananaskis. The camp provides children and adults with special needs — a life-changing outdoor experience.



"Camp provides a unique opportunity for campers to build self-esteem and independence. Activities challenge their mind and body, while creating a recipe for lasting friendships and lifelong memories." (Retrieved on Oct. 10, 2012, from <http://www.easterseals.ab.ca/Site/OurPrograms/EasterSealsCampHorizon.aspx>)

On Sept. 6, 2012, Access Calgary Passenger Agent Ryan Yeadon rappelled from the top of the Sun Life Tower, in his wheelchair. For those not familiar with the Sun Life Tower in Calgary, it soars 30 storeys tall (375 feet high).



Access Calgary is very proud of Ryan and his accomplishment.

Congratulations Ryan. We can't wait to see what's next!

Access Calgary pick up and drop off locations at Market Mall



Holiday Schedule

Booking and Customer Service lines will be closed on the following statutory holidays:

Sunday, Nov. 11, 2012	Remembrance Day
Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2012	Christmas Day
Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2012	Boxing Day
Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2013	New Year's Day
Monday, Feb. 18, 2013	Family Day
Friday, Mar. 29, 2013	Good Friday
Sunday, Mar. 31, 2013	Easter Sunday
Monday, May 20, 2013	Victoria Day
Monday, July 1, 2013	Canada Day
Monday, Aug. 5, 2013	Heritage Day
Monday Sept. 2, 2013	Labour Day

If you require a trip the day after a statutory holiday, you must request it the day before the holiday or up to four days in advance of the day of travel.

Access Calgary automatically cancels subscription trips (except trips for dialysis treatment) on statutory holidays. If you require your subscription trip on a statutory holiday, please call **403-537-7777** and press option 2 to book a casual trip.



Meet our new Eligibility Services co-ordinator

Aneesa Howell was promoted to Eligibility Services co-ordinator on April 23, 2012.

Aneesa has been an eligibility specialist with Access Calgary since 2005. Prior to joining Access Calgary, she was a nursing assistant with Home Care and various other agencies, while completing her BA at the University of Calgary. Aneesa specialized in working with palliative care patients. Before going to university, Aneesa was a regional manager for the music retailer HMV and was responsible for 16 stores and 154 staff in Edmonton and Winnipeg.

In her personal life, Aneesa is kept very busy with her husband, two children under three years old and a very active Labrador named Lincoln!

With Aneesa's abilities and experience, Access Calgary's Eligibility Services will flourish under her guidance.

Access Calgary employee recognitions

Our customers have noticed the great work our staff does.

Access Calgary is pleased to take this opportunity to recognize our employees who received customer commendations. They are:

Kerry G.	Jean C. (2)	Cheryl W. (2)	Carolyn S.	Jodi L.
Wendy M. (3)	Debora C. (3)	Maryellen G.	Doug B.	Mary F.
Dana R.	Doug S.	Joanna S. (3)	Elizabeth F.	Joanna S.
Jeff B. (2)	Judy G. (2)	Blanca F.	David H.	Anita U.
Margaret M. (3)	Mary F. (2)	Yasmin D.	Jennifer C.	Ryan Y. (2)
Lorrie M. (2)	Debbie P.	Tannis B.	Jennifer S.	John K.

Congratulations to all of you!

Our customers' satisfaction is important to us. Thank you for taking the time to let us know you appreciate the service. If you'd like to submit a commendation for one of our employees, or if you have a concern about our service, contact Customer Service at 403-537-7777 and press option 4.



Driver Recognition Awards

The Access Calgary Advisory Committee selected the following drivers for the Driver Recognition award. Two drivers are selected randomly from commendations sent in by you. Please keep sending your commendations for exceptional drivers to Access Calgary Customer Service at **403-537-7777** and press option 4.



Imad – Checker

March



George – Southland

March



Quenton – Associated

April



Jafar – Checker

April



Angus – Calgary HandiBus

May



Ken – Calgary HandiBus

May



Evans – Checker

June



Manvir – Checker

June



Calgary HandiBus celebrates 40 years of service



On Jan. 1, 1972, Calgary HandiBus started providing accessible transportation to Calgarians. The staff consisted of one dispatcher/manager and 12 full-time drivers, all of which was overseen by a volunteer board of directors. The original fleet had six buses that were donated to the service: four were dedicated to transport school-age children to various day programs, and the other two were used to transport 75 adult customers.

Demand for service grew at a steady pace and, by the end of 1972, the fleet increased to 12 vehicles. Ridership also continued to increase rapidly and, by the end of 1974, there were 260 registered customers.

Today, HandiBus has a fleet of 105 buses and 150 employees. On Aug. 30, 2012, an open house was held at the HandiBus yard to celebrate the accomplishment of 40 years of service. Over the years, many things have

changed at HandiBus; however, one thing that has never changed is the commitment and dedication of the staff and the Board.

The very first bus that went into service was donated and so has every bus since then. Raising the funds to purchase new buses continues to be an important part of the Association. Each new bus now comes at a cost of \$90,000; each and every year, at least 10 buses need to be replaced.

HandiBus is grateful to all of our partners in the community for ensuring that we can continue to be out on the road every day helping others. Everyone at HandiBus thanks our donors, staff, Board of Directors, and Access Calgary for partnering with us each and every year.

(Calgary HandiBus is one of four transportation service providers for Access Calgary.)

Subscription Service

Do you take trips that start and finish at the same place and at the same time every week? Consider booking a subscription. This service is offered to any eligible customer who travels from the same origin to the same destination at the same time of day for each trip at least one

day a week for a minimum of at least six weeks. This allows the customer to call only once to request and set up the service rather than calling every time the same trip is required. Customers also have the option of putting their subscription trips on pause, if going on vacation or requiring

them for a few days. The subscription can be resumed upon your return. To get started, call Access Calgary at **403-537-7777** and press option 2. An agent will be happy to assist you in arranging your subscription. Please note that subscriptions are subject to availability.

Winter is coming

Winter weather will soon be upon us. Customers are asked to ensure sidewalks and steps at their residences are clear of snow, ice and other debris. This improves safety for both customers and Access Calgary drivers.

Our weather can change quickly and unexpectedly. Please ensure you and those in your care are dressed appropriately for all trips. If the vehicle you're in feels either too warm or too cool, speak with the driver and he/she will try to adjust the temperature so that everyone on board is comfortable.



Access Calgary agency meeting and open house

Thank you to those who attended the agency meeting on May 15, 2012, and our customer open house held on June 30, 2012. Customers had an opportunity to view our operations centre, see demonstrations and have their questions answered from Access Calgary staff, transportation service providers and the Access Calgary Advisory Committee. Attendees also provided input to the RouteAhead team on what type of services they would like to see Calgary Transit operate in the future.

We had a wonderful turn out to both events! Thank you for taking the time to join us.

Look for more information in our 2013 Spring newsletter for dates for next year.

Out of Service Area Trips

Access Calgary is a division of Calgary Transit and provides shared-ride public transportation service for eligible Calgary residents who cannot use Calgary Transit regular services for some or all of their trips. However, please note that service is provided only within the Calgary Transit service area. Customers seeking trips outside this service area have to make alternative arrangements. Please refer to the Calgary Transit website, calgarytransit.com, for current transit routes and service area coverage.

ACA creates award in memory of Ella Anderson



In memory of Ella Anderson, Access Calgary's Eligibility Services coordinator who passed away this past February, The City of Calgary's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) has decided to create a new Accessible Transportation Award in Ella's name. This award will focus on qualities that Ella was respected for most — her dedication to making transportation more accessible for everyone in our community and a positive attitude and willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty. This award will be presented

annually to an individual or group (public or private) to recognize their exceptional contribution in making our city more inclusive and accessible for all who live in our community. It will be presented for the first time in December 2012 to coincide with the International Persons with Disabilities Day. Everyone at Access Calgary would like to sincerely thank all members of the ACA for creating such a special tribute to honour Ella Anderson. This award allows her hard work and dedication to live on.

Maximum wheelchair size on Access Calgary vehicles



Mobility devices come in various sizes and shapes; however, not all of them are appropriate for Access Calgary service due to their size. Occasionally, customers have

not been able to use the service because their wheelchair or scooter would not fit on the lift. If you are purchasing a new mobility device and wish to use it for Access Calgary

service, please ensure it is less than 32" wide and less than 48" long. This will ensure that we can transport you safely.

Who are the Access Calgary schedulers? What do they do?



Schedulers from left to right: Vikas, Dean, Andrew R., Charlene, Azim, Larry, Jeroen, Andrew L.

Access Calgary has five full time and two relief schedulers who are responsible for scheduling more than 4,000 trips every weekday and over 1,100 trips on weekends. Schedulers have to ensure trips are efficiently organized on approximately 220 different vehicles. They use specialized scheduling software coupled with quick and effective decision-making to develop the runs for each vehicle under tight timelines and budget.

Access Calgary customers have unique needs and require specific vehicles to meet their mobility

requirements. The schedulers try their best to honour the trip times requested by the customers while keeping their travel times as reasonable as possible. Work is distributed between Access Calgary's four service providers (Calgary HandiBus, Southland Transportation, Checker Taxi and Associated Taxi).

Access Calgary schedulers are a skilled and dedicated team and bring a wealth of experience to their roles. Their focus is to provide Access Calgary customers with the best service possible.

Contact numbers

Access Calgary Operations

403-537-7777

From the voice menu, make your choice from the following:

- #1** Acrobat (24 hours daily),
 - Automated telephone system.
- #2** Advance bookings (daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.),
 - Request a trip or trip change.
- #3** Same-day booking inquiries (daily 6 a.m. to midnight),
 - Includes stand-by requests, late bus inquiries and same-day cancellations.
- #4** Customer service (Mon. to Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.),
 - Feedback, service concerns, compliments or general information.
- #5** Eligibility services (Mon. to Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.),
 - Apply for or renew registration or change personal information.

#6 Holiday hours.

TTY (daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)

403-537-7977

Access Calgary Eligibility Services

(Mon. to Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

403-537-7770

Access Calgary website

accesscalgary.com

Calgary Transit website

calgarytransit.com

Did you know?

The best time to call to request a trip is after 11 a.m.



Tell your friends and family!

This newsletter is available on the Access Calgary website.

Go to: **accesscalgary.com** and click on **Newsletters** in the left-hand column.

**If you would like this newsletter
in an alternative format or
different sized font, call 403-537-7770.**