

Who is AJ Ryland & How is He Helping Customers?

Since becoming the manager of Calgary Transit Access (CTA) late last fall, AJ Ryland has been making some changes. He has worked for The City of Winnipeg, The City of Ottawa and brings over 25 years of experience in transit to CTA.

At the beginning of his career, AJ worked as a bus driver in Winnipeg. He later moved to Ottawa where he became the manager of OCTranspo's Para Transit service.

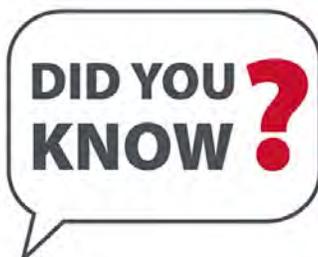
All of AJ's experience has made him very customer-focused when it comes to providing transit service. Under his leadership, CTA has been going through some changes, all with the goal of improving customer service.

So what are some of the things we've done this year to make your service better?



2019 CTA improvements

- Reminder phone calls to customers with eligibility interviews.
- New eligibility interview location at Seton Library.
- Follow-up apology phone calls when we miss your trip.
- Call-backs when we can't provide a same-day trip.
- Reviewing customers who have not taken a trip in two years to see if they still need our service.
- Putting dignity into customer service by not asking customers for their doctor's information when booking a trip for a medical appointment.



As of August 2019...

93 per cent of trips are on time

75 per cent of trips have customers onboard for 45 minutes or less

822,035 trips have been provided

Budget

Many of you know that City Council reduced the 2019 budget by \$60M this summer. As a part of this, Calgary Transit reduced operating costs by \$9.27M for the rest of the year; we understand our customers are probably wondering what this means for them. We want our customers to know that we understand how much you rely on our service to get around Calgary. Calgary Transit Access (CTA) will not be changing the number of trips we provide for the rest of this year.

For 2020, we are working on being more efficient behind the scenes; by using all of our service providers, we're making sure we are scheduling your trips in the most economical way we can, without compromising on customer service. We want you to know we are working hard to make sure you still see the same level of service now and in the future. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Customer Service, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or send us an email at calgarytransitaccessinfo@calgary.ca. We're here to answer your questions.

For All Our Customers, Great & Small

This spring, our team of Calgary Transit Access (CTA) Passenger Agents (PA) and Customer Service pulled together to help a customer during a difficult time. Wesly Ramage called in to schedule a ride to the vet with his guide dog, Simmons, who was very sick and at the end of his life.

Service dogs like Simmons share a unique bond with their person; the support they provide makes many things more accessible for those they are paired with.



Wesly called to book Simmons' last ride and because it was a same-day booking for an emergency, some adjustments needed to be made to the run schedule.

Because the CTA passenger agent and scheduling teams pulled together, they were able to support Wesly and Simmons and accommodate this ride.

Carol Peck is the PA who spoke to Wesly on the phone. Wesly says she was compassionate, empathetic and sincerely cared about the situation.

He wants to share his heartfelt thanks with everyone at CTA who pulled together to help him get Simmons to the vet, one last time. "Everything you do at CTA matters and it does make a difference in the lives of our customers and their companions, like Simmons, who has crossed the Rainbow Bridge," says AJ Ryland.

Travel Training Summer Camp

This year's Get on Board Travel Training summer camp hosted by Calgary Transit Access (CTA) was a great success with 45 kids who attended two camp sessions. The goal of the summer camp is to teach kids with various physical and cognitive disabilities, aged 11 to 18, how to safely and independently use fixed-route transit services.

CTA was pleased to partner with the Calgary Board of Education and The City's Recreation business unit for the 2019 Travel Training session. Campers had the opportunity to tour the Oliver Bowen Maintenance Facility (OBMF), which is the first time it has been included in the training sessions. Kids got to experience a CTrain wash and they were excited to try out the same CTrain simulator used to train operators.

Each of the camp sessions ended with kids being invited to participate with their parents in the Great Transit Race. Skills they used for the race included showing valid fare payment to Peace Officers, retrieving lost items and using the Help Phone at a station. It was followed by a graduation where kids were presented with a certificate of completion by CTA manager, AJ Ryland and Transit Teddy. CTA wants to say a special thanks to everyone who made this year's Travel Training summer camp such a success.



Seatbelt Covers

We're pleased to announce Calgary Transit Access now allows the use of seatbelt guards, often referred to as Angel Guards. We started to introduce the Angel Guard on a trial basis with customers over the summer and we've gotten some great feedback. The cover is affordable and works at preventing customers from unbuckling while on a trip, which keeps them, the driver and other passengers safe. If you'd like to know more about this seatbelt cover, please contact Customer Service.



Holiday Hours

The Customer Service & Eligibility phone lines will be **closed** for the following holidays:

Remembrance Day

Monday, November 11

Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 25

Boxing Day

Thursday, December 26

New Years' Day 2020

Wednesday, January 1

Wait For Us at Your Door

Calgary Transit Access (CTA) is a door-to-door service and we want to remind our customers not to rush outside to catch your ride.

Your driver will come to the main entrance of your pick-up location and help you get to the vehicle.

Drivers can offer a supportive arm so that your walk to your ride is safer.

Make sure you're ready to go when the driver arrives in the 20 minute pick-up window; this means having your coat and shoes on and any personal items such as a purse or other type of bag you might need to take with you, packed.

If you live in a house, the best way to let your driver know you're ready, is to stand inside at your front door where they can see you – if you've got a screen door, you can stand behind it with the main door open.

Remember, in the cold weather, it's best to wait inside.

If you live in an apartment or condo, you can wait for the driver in your front lobby near the doors where they can see you.

Being ready helps keep vehicles on time for all of our customers.



Housekeeping: Your Transit Fare

Please remember, Calgary Transit Access (CTA) is a public transportation service for customers who have gone through the eligibility interview process and qualified for our service. Because we are a public transit service, we need to see your fare when you board the vehicle for each trip. This means you need to show the fare twice for a round trip; once when you're picked up and again when you're catching your return ride.

Companions or caregivers who are accompanying a customer on a ride must also pay their own fare. CTA understands many of our customers worry about losing their bus pass or ticket. One solution for keeping your pass safe is to use a lanyard. Contact our Customer Service Centre and we can arrange for a free lanyard to be sent to you; you can wear this around your neck with your monthly pass showing in an attached, see-through plastic card holder. Lanyards have a safety break-away clasp so that you won't get caught on anything.

We've seen a lot of customers with photo copies or photographs of bus passes on their phone and unfortunately, this is not considered valid fare payment for your ride. All passes or tickets must be originals and with the customer for their trip; keeping the pass in a front window at home to be seen from the street is not considered acceptable fare payment. CTA service relies on your fare in order for us to keep the service running. Your driver will appreciate it when you have your fare ready when they pick you up

Reminders!

November 3

Clocks Fall Back 1 Hour so remember, before bed on November 2, change your clocks!

Snow Clearing

Winter is around the corner so please remember to clear your walkways and use some sand or salt on icy paths so that you and your driver are safe walking to and from the vehicle.



If you are unable to shovel your walkway, check out The City's Snow Angel volunteer program in your community at calgary.ca/snowangels.

You can call 311 or go online for more information. If there isn't a clear, safe path for drivers to escort customers, your trip may be cancelled at the door.

Don't Forget!

Daylight hours are getting shorter so keep your porch light on! This helps drivers see your house number when you're being picked up or dropped off.

Am I an Active Customer?

Customers who haven't taken a trip for two years will have their status changed to **Closed**. Customers with a **Closed** status have to reapply for service.

Your Ride: The 20 Minute Pick-up Window

Customer trip requests have a 20-minute pick-up window. This window is confirmed at the time your trip is requested either online or over the phone. The only time this would not be the case is if your trip is wait-listed. We ask customers to be ready at the start of the pick-up window; so if your pick-up window is between 10 and 10:20 a.m., you need to be ready at the exterior door of where you're being picked up at 10 a.m.

Sometimes, your ride may arrive early because traffic was light or for some other reason. If your ride arrives at 9:50 a.m. and you're not ready because your pick-up window starts at 10 a.m., it's ok to take the last 10 minutes to finish getting ready. The driver can wait for you until the start of your 20-minute pick-up window at 10 a.m. As long as you're ready to go at 10 a.m., there's no need to rush.

Contact Us

Customer Service Centre
403-537-7777

Monday to Friday from
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Send us an email at
calgarytransitaccessinfo@calgary.ca

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