

# How to Ride Guide



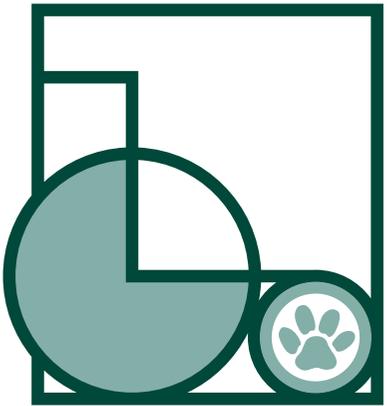
# ACCESS LYNX

PARATRANSIT PARTNERSHIP

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455 North Garland Avenue  
Orlando, Florida 32801  
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**ACCESS LYNX**  
PARATRANSIT PARTNERSHIP

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This brochure is designed to “Help You Ride” ACCESS LYNX, our paratransit partnership with MV Transportation, Inc. In it you will find a wealth of information regarding policies and procedures that are pertinent to making your trip as convenient and hassle-free as possible.

For information on eligibility, contact us at 407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 6. If you have any concerns regarding the service, please contact ACCESS LYNX Customer Relations at 407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 5.

## **An Overview**

ACCESS LYNX is a shared ride paratransit, door-to-door transportation service provided by MV Transportation under the supervision of the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, d/b/a LYNX. The program provides complementary service for eligible individuals who are not able to use the regular bus service (also called “fixed route”) because of a disability or other limitations. However, many customers find the fixed route service is often the best, most economical way for disabled or disadvantaged customers to get to where they need to go.

Our fixed route system serves thousands of customers with disabilities and special needs each day. Bus passes for seniors and customers with disabilities are available at a discounted rate. Currently, the ACCESS LYNX paratransit program provides more than 2,000 scheduled passenger trips per day, using a variety of vehicles specially equipped for individuals with various disabilities. Because the demand for these special transit services is high, it is very important that each customer carefully follow the guidelines in this booklet.

Your cooperation and flexibility will allow ACCESS LYNX to serve you better and help make it possible for us to serve others.

## **Service Provider**

MV Transportation staff handles the Customer Call Center, which takes all reservation requests, and customer service calls (where is my trip, cancellations, etc.). MV Transportation staff also handles scheduling, dispatch of all trips and provides the rides within our tri-county area of Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.

## Eligibility

Individuals who are interested in using ACCESS LYNX Paratransit Service must apply through a written application process. ACCESS LYNX is responsible for determining eligibility for paratransit service. ACCESS LYNX provides transportation under various programs. Program determination is based on verification of the application and may also include a Functional Assessment. One-on-one Travel Training is also provided to those who can access the fixed route system (public bus service) at no cost to the customer. All programs have a two-year (2) certification period.

Paratransit eligibility is not automatic, nor is eligibility recertification.

Paratransit service is provided to:

“Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.”

## Customer Service Hours

Reservations can be made between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., seven (7) days a week. To check on your trip or to cancel a trip, Customer Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If possible, the best time to call and make trip requests or travel is between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m..

To reach the ACCESS LYNX Call Center:

Phone: **407-423-TRIP (8747)**  
**1-800-556-TRIP (8747)**

TDD: **407-851-8594**

Telephone Device For The Deaf

FAX: **407-851-8203**

Listen carefully to all options.

You may reach Eligibility Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at **407-423-TRIP (8747) Option 6** or by fax at **407-849-6759**.

For Fixed Route Information call **407-841-LYNX (5969)**

Web Site: **www.golynx.com**

## Operational Hours

ACCESS LYNX services are available any time that the public bus system is in operation.

## Making a Reservation

If you are in an emergency situation, call 911. ACCESS LYNX can not provide same-day service or assume liability if you are in a distress situation.

Customers may schedule up to three (3) round-trips with one (1) phone call.

When you call, please have the following information ready:

- Customer's name
- Home address
- Whether the customer is using a wheelchair or other personal mobility device
- Customer's telephone number
- Customer's birth date
- Whether there are any other special considerations for the customer to travel
- Date transportation is needed

- The time of your appointment or time you need to be at your destination
- The time you will need to be picked up to return back to your origin
- Destination address, zip code and telephone number
- General purpose of the appointment
- Detailed drop-off and pick-up location information
- If any additional people or service animals traveling with the customer.

Reservations staff will give you an estimated pick-up time. This is the time you can expect the driver to arrive. You will need to be ready to travel up to fifteen (15) minutes prior to your pick-up time, and the driver may arrive up to thirty (30) minutes after the pick-up time and still get you to your scheduled destination on time.

The pick-up time is based on the necessary ride time on the vehicle, which will be a direct result of:

- The distance that you are

traveling - longer distances will require more ride time.

- The time of day you are traveling - peak traffic times and the more people requesting to travel at the same time you request may result in a longer ride time.
- Inclement weather - Rain will decrease the speed of our vehicles as well as other vehicles traveling over public roadways and will result in a longer ride time.
- Picking up and dropping off other passengers - our system is a shared ride system. Other passengers will be picked up and dropped off along the way to your destination and may increase your ride time.

You should plan to be on the vehicle for a minimum of one (1) hour for any trip and a maximum of twice that of a fixed route trip.

When you schedule your “originating” trip, you must also schedule your “return” trip (if you need one). Be sure to schedule it late enough in case your appointment runs late. If you don’t schedule a return trip in advance, you may not get a return trip

## Online Trip Requests

ACCESS LYNX trips can now be scheduled at **www.golynx.com**. This will allow ADA and Medicaid customers to request trips at any time – even when our Reservations Department is closed! No more waiting on hold for a reservationist. To request a trip, go online to [www.golynx.com](http://www.golynx.com) which brings you to the homepage of the LYNX website. Click on ridership services (blue shaded box) and then click on ACCESS LYNX Trip Request from the drop down menu (sixth selection down).

That will bring up the trip request form, which must be filled out and submitted. You’ll need to enter all of the pertinent trip information which is the same information that you’re currently giving to your reservationist when you call.

There is one additional piece of information you’ll need: A five- or six-digit Customer ID number. You may call Customer Service to get your Customer ID.

MV Transportation will review trip requests each day and transmit a confirmation notice back to you via

e-mail. If you do not receive a trip confirmation, please contact Customer Service at **407-423-TRIP (8747)** before 5 p.m. of the day prior to your trip to verify that the information was received and a reservation was created.

Online trip requests must be submitted by 4 p.m. the day prior to the trip.

## Fares

The driver will collect the fare when you board the vehicle. The reservations staff will tell you the amount of your fare. You must have exact change; drivers do not carry money and will not be able to stop to make change. Drivers do not accept tips. Please notify ACCESS LYNX if any driver asks for or accepts a tip.

Prepaid fare tickets may be purchased online at **[www.golynx.com/lynxstore](http://www.golynx.com/lynxstore)** or by mail or telephone (**407-841-2279 ext. 6024**). Pre-paid fare tickets are sold at a 10 percent discount in increments of 50¢ and \$1, and are available in books of \$20 (sold for \$18) and \$50 (sold for \$45).

## Standing Requests

A “standing request” is for customers who travel to the same place at the same

time on the same day(s) of the week. If you have a regular appointment that you need to go to, you may want to ask reservations staff to submit a “standing request” for service. Depending on the funding source of your trip, this request may be granted. Please remember, however, that you cannot change your standing request more than once per month, or this privilege will be revoked. If you have a standing request and will not be using it for one or multiple days, please contact us to cancel or suspend services to avoid having “No Shows” recorded in your file.

## Holiday Service

Standing requests on ACCESS LYNX are cancelled on the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

## Cancellations

ACCESS LYNX is a “shared ride” system that needs everyone’s cooperation to make it run smoothly. If you must cancel your reservation, it is imperative that you inform the ACCESS LYNX Customer Service Call Center at

#### **407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 4.**

You will need to notify us more than three (3) hours before your scheduled pick-up time, or risk being a “No Show.”

## **Lateness and No Shows**

Because you will be sharing your ride, it is important that you are ready to go when your vehicle arrives. ACCESS LYNX will wait only five (5) minutes, because there are other customers either on board or waiting for their scheduled ride. If a vehicle arrives to pick you up and you are not there or you do not get in the vehicle by the scheduled time, you will be considered a no show. If you decide not to ride with us, it is very important that you cancel your trip at least three (3) hours before your scheduled pick-up time. If a vehicle arrives to pick you up and you are not there, or you do not board the vehicle as scheduled, you will be considered a no show and your services may be suspended. If this is not your first occurrence, you may receive a letter of warning or notice of suspension. You may appeal this process if you have information that is contrary to that noted above.

TIP: When you are making a reservation, you must tell the reservationist exactly where you will be waiting. However, at larger facilities, we may tell you to wait in a common pick-up area that has been pre-arranged with the facility.

The driver will be given the same information that you supply to the reservations staff and will look for you there. Do not leave the area as you might miss your ride. If the driver is not able to find you within five (5) minutes of arriving, or if you did not cancel at least three (3) hours before your scheduled pick-up time, you will be considered a no show. The driver will leave a door hanger at the location where you were scheduled to be picked up.

## **No Show Policy**

The following No Show Policy, as approved by the Local Coordinating Board of Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties, is currently in place:

Customers may not have more than four no shows within any 90-day period. Customers who exceed this number can only use the service for medically

necessary trips for the next 30 days. There will be a 60-day suspension for the second occurrence of more than four no shows within any 90-day period; and 90 days for each occurrence of more than four no shows within any 90-day period thereafter.

Trips cancelled with less than three hours notice prior to the scheduled pick-up time will be considered a no show.

To avoid receiving a no show, we ask that you contact us at least (3) hours prior to your scheduled pick-up time to say that you will not be using your reservation. Doing so, allows others to use the service and allows ACCESS LYNX to provide quality service.

You may contact us to cancel your reservation or subscription (standing order) 24-hours a day, 7-days a week at **407-423-TRIP (8747)**.

Reservations, Customer Service and Dispatch staff have all been trained in how to properly code no shows.

## Changing Return Times

Because so many people rely on this service, changes in the scheduled return

time should be strictly limited. If you are ready to return more than two (2) hour earlier than originally scheduled, you may call and ask for an early pick-up. ACCESS LYNX will do all we can to assist in these instances, but we are unable to guarantee that we will be able to honor the request.

## Will Call

ACCESS LYNX drivers are scheduled to pick up multiple customers so they can only wait five minutes for customers to be ready to travel. If the driver waits longer than five minutes or must look for customers at the pick-up point, they risk delaying other customers scheduled for pick up.

If you are at your residence and cannot travel when the driver arrives, you will be considered a No Show.

If you are not able to travel for your return trip at the time the driver arrives, you will be considered a “No Show” and must contact our Customer Service Department at **407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 4**. We will dispatch the first available vehicle to pick you up.

We will try to send someone as quickly

as possible, however, it may be up to 90 minutes before a driver is available.

## **Boarding Early**

If your vehicle arrives before your scheduled pick-up window (e.g. ACCESS LYNX vehicle arrives at 9:40 for a pick-up window that runs from 9:45-10:15) and you are ready, you may board immediately.

If you are not ready and the vehicle arrives early, the driver must wait five (5) minutes into the pick-up window before leaving. Using the example above, that means he will stay until 9:50 before leaving.

## **Late Pick-Ups**

It can be frustrating if a vehicle is late picking you up for a scheduled appointment, or to return you home. Please wait at least thirty (30) minutes past your scheduled pick-up time before calling ACCESS LYNX Customer Service. Your driver may arrive up to 30 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time and still be considered on time as long as you get to your destination on time. Please remember the pick-up time

is based on factors such as the time you need to be at your destination, traffic delays, inclement weather, and multi-loading of other customers.

## **Customer's Responsibilities & Safety Tips**

- Wait in a safe, well-lit location.
- Choose a pick-up and drop-off location that allows the driver to not lose sight of his vehicle when assisting you to or from the door.
- Let the vehicle come to a complete stop before approaching.
- Allow the driver to assist you in boarding the vehicle; ask for special assistance if you need it.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- All personal belongings are your responsibility.
- You must load and unload your own belongings (three bag limit).
- Bring a car seat for any children under the age of five (5) years

old and make sure that it is used properly.

- Do not eat, drink or smoke in the vehicle, though we do encourage customers who will be away from home for an extended period of time to bring a snack, drink and medications with them.
- Do not use audio or video equipment that may distract the driver's attention.
- No disruptive behavior, you may risk suspension.
- No unscheduled stops.
- Proper dress is required, including shoes and shirts.
- No special requests for specific drivers or vehicles can be honored.

## Wheelchair Service

Our service is “door-to-door.” When you make your reservation, be sure to mention if you have difficulties walking, are using a mobility device or are using a wheelchair. Wheelchairs must be provided by the passenger, and you must be on the ground floor at the time you are to be picked up.

A wheelchair is a mobility aid designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. Our vehicles are equipped to transport “common wheelchairs” which do not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied.

## Ambulatory Customers

Ambulatory customers may ride the wheelchair lift if they request it.

## Service Animals

Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability may travel with the customer including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruder or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

# Oxygen Requirement

Travel with oxygen equipment is permitted, but the equipment must be small enough so that the driver does not have to assist with the loading and unloading of it. The safety and use of this equipment is the responsibility of the passenger.

## Drivers

ACCESS LYNX drivers are trained by MV Transportation according to LYNX specifications and guidelines. Drivers must have a safe driving record, pass a criminal background check, be able to pass a Department of Transportation physical and test negative for drugs and alcohol. Also, they are trained in defensive driving, and to safely assist and be sensitive to passengers' special needs. Drivers are selected based on their ability to provide the specialized service needed for the ACCESS LYNX program.

Drivers are not required to carry the passengers' belongings, assist wheelchairs down more than one step, push wheelchairs through grass or sand or do any lifting of the passenger into or out of their mobility device.

Drivers are expected to:

- Be courteous
- Drive safely
- Wear a seat belt
- Securely tie down wheelchairs
- Have an ACCESS LYNX photo I.D. attached to their uniform that can be easily seen by customers
- Be properly uniformed
- Make a good faith effort to find a customer (horn honking to notify a customer of arrival is not acceptable)

Traffic delays, tight schedules, weather conditions, passengers running late and other factors can cause stressful situations that could affect the quality of service for ACCESS LYNX customers. If a driver or passenger acts in an unreasonable manner (or contrary to the policies and procedures) the problem should be reported by calling **407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 5.**

## Reporting Concerns/Suggestions

If you have a concern about any area of ACCESS LYNX services, please contact Customer Relations at **407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 5**. Most issues can be handled within a matter of days, while others may require extensive investigation and could take several weeks to resolve.

ACCESS LYNX also provides a public forum to address the concerns of our customers. Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings are held every other month to address the needs of all LYNX's customers with disabilities. In addition, the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB) meets quarterly to assist in the development of policies and guidelines for the system. Public comments are also received to address the concerns of ACCESS LYNX customers. For meeting dates, times and locations, please contact MetroPlan Orlando at **407-481-5672**.

If, after notifying ACCESS LYNX, filing your concerns and receiving your response, your comments have

not been adequately addressed, you may contact the Local Coordinating Board at MetroPlan Orlando, **407-481-5672**. As a final step you may contact the State's Transportation Disadvantaged Helpline at **800-983-2435**.

## Lost Items

If you have lost a personal item and believe it may be in an ACCESS LYNX vehicle, please contact Customer Service at **407-423-TRIP (8747), Option 4** to report it. If the item is found, you may be asked to travel to a central pick-up point to retrieve it. If the item is not located on the vehicle, ACCESS LYNX, the service provider nor the driver will be held responsible for replacement.

## Help someone get a ride...

Remember to check the box to donate \$1, or more, to the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund the next time you (or a friend or family member) purchase your auto/truck/boat tags. Donated funds will be used to provide transportation services in the local service area that they are collected.