



2024-25 BUS PLUS RECERTIFICATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is DART requiring recertification of disability status for its Bus Plus Paratransit customers?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as defined in Part 37 – Transportation Services for Individuals with Disabilities, states that a public transit entity — in this case, DART — may require recertification of the eligibility of ADA paratransit eligible individuals at reasonable intervals. Effective July 1, 2023, DART will require paratransit eligible customers to recertify their eligibility every three (3) years.

When will I receive a letter notifying me it is time to recertify my Bus Plus Paratransit status with DART?

Each of DART's Bus Plus customers that were previously approved for paratransit service prior to July 1, 2023, will receive a letter notifying them of the need to recertify their disability status. The letters will be dated, and customers will be given 60 days from the date printed on their letter to submit a new application. Letters will be mailed in alphabetical order, A-Z, beginning in February 2024 and concluding in July 2025.

Am I able to submit a new application prior to receiving my recertification letter?

Please be patient: In order for DART to process the recertification applications, letters will be mailed out in alphabetical order, A-Z, beginning February 2024 and continuing through July 2025. DART prefers its Bus Plus customers to wait to submit a new application until they receive their recertification letter.

Someone I know received a Bus Plus recertification letter, but I have not received one. What should I do?

Please be patient: There is a large number of applications for DART to send, receive and review, therefore DART must spread out this process over several months. Recertification letters and applications will be mailed out in alphabetical order, A-Z. The mailings began February 2024 and will continue through July 2025. DART prefers its Bus Plus customers to wait to submit a new application until they receive their recertification letter.

How long do I have to complete the recertification?

Customers will receive a letter in the mail about Bus Plus recertification, as well as an application for Bus Plus recertification. The application includes a section to be completed by a medical provider or other qualified professional. Bus Plus customers will have 60 days from the date printed on the letter to submit their fully completed application.

If I don't complete the recertification, will I still be able to utilize the Bus Plus Paratransit services?

Unfortunately, DART will not be able to continue providing paratransit service to Bus Plus customers once their eligibility has expired. Customers that do not submit a new application within 60 days of the date printed on their recertification letter will no longer have access to utilize paratransit services.

When will my Bus Plus Paratransit services expire?

Your access to DART Paratransit's Bus Plus services will expire 60 days from the date printed on your recertification letter, which will be sent to you in the mail, unless you submit a new application for DART's review to recertify your disability status.

For example:

- If your letter is dated February 1, 2024, you will no longer have access to Bus Plus services beginning on April 1, 2024.
- If your letter is dated March 1, 2024, you will no longer have access to Bus Plus services beginning on April 30, 2024.

Where and how do I submit my new Bus Plus application for recertification?

1. Please find the Bus Plus Application provided within the envelope mailed to you containing your recertification letter.
2. You will need to have the Professional Verification Form section of the Bus Plus Application completed by a health care professional to provide verification of your disability and its effect on your ability to use DART's regular bus system. Some examples of health care professionals that can certify your application include:
 - Clinical Social Worker, Case Manager, Occupational Therapist, Psychiatrist, Physical Therapist, Rehabilitation Counselor, Optometrist, Ophthalmologist, Physician, Psychologist, Registered Nurse or Nurse Practitioner, etc.
3. Once the application is complete, including the Professional Verification Form, there are several ways you can submit it.
 - Fax the completed application to the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority at 515-283-8103,
 - Email the completed application to busplus@ridedart.com, or,
 - Mail the completed application to:
 - Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
 - Attn: Paratransit
 - 620 Cherry Street
 - Des Moines, IA 50309
4. Your application will be reviewed, and an eligibility determination will be made within 21 days of receipt of a complete application, and the results will be mailed to you.

I am unable to complete my Bus Plus application fully. Can I submit a partial application?

DART requires the application to be fully completed. Incomplete applications will not be processed. DART must receive a new Bus Plus Application from you within 60 days of the date printed on your recertification letter to avoid service interruption.

What if I don't have a medical or other qualified professional that can help me?

As needed, DART can help Bus Plus applicants find a medical or other qualified professional to verify their disability status for the application. Please call 515-283-8100, then select Option 0, to speak to DART Customer Service.

I don't speak English. Is DART able to help me with my application?

In addition to English, the Bus Plus Application is available in translated versions including Spanish, Arabic and Vietnamese at ridedart.com/Paratransit. For additional assistance, please call DART's Customer Service team at 515-283-8100, Option 0.

I have fully completed the Bus Plus Application. Where do I submit it?

Once completed, the Bus Plus Application can be returned several ways:

- Fax the completed application to the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority at 515-283-8103,
- Email the completed application to busplus@ridedart.com, or,
- Mail the completed application to:

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
Attn: Paratransit
620 Cherry Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

If necessary, you can also submit the application in-person at the Customer Service window at DART Central Station, 620 Cherry Street, Des Moines.

Do I need the internet or a printer to complete the Bus Plus application?

You do not need internet or a printer to complete the application. The recertification letter you receive in the mail will include a printed copy of the application for you to use.

Does DART accept old versions of the Bus Plus application?

DART is no longer accepting versions of the Bus Plus application that were in use prior to July 1, 2023. The Bus Plus application now requires certification of disability status from a medical provider or other qualified professional.

Can a DART Customer Service representative fill out the application on the behalf of the applicant?

Customers filling out an application may get help from anyone familiar with them or their condition, however DART staff are not authorized to complete a Bus Plus Application on the behalf of the applicant.

I became a Bus Plus-eligible customer after July 1, 2023. Do I need to reapply as part of this recertification process?

Any customer that was approved for Bus Plus eligibility after July 1, 2023, will need to reapply every three years moving forward, or whenever the certification expires (ex: temporary disability status). DART will notify customers when they are due to recertify for Bus Plus Paratransit service.

Will I need to recertify my Bus Plus status again in the future?

Yes. Beginning July 1, 2023, DART requires paratransit-eligible customers to recertify their eligibility every three years, or whenever the certification expires (for example, temporary disability status may expire earlier than three years). DART will notify customers when they are due to recertify for Bus Plus Paratransit service.

When and how will I find out the results of my recertification request?

Once submitted, your application will be reviewed, and an eligibility determination will be made within 21 days of receipt of a complete application. You will receive a letter that states whether or not you are eligible to continue DART Paratransit's Bus Plus service.

Does submitting a new application automatically renew my access to DART Paratransit's Bus Plus services?

Within 21 days of submitting your complete application, you will receive a letter that states whether or not you are eligible to continue service. This review will be based on your ability to use regular fixed route bus service. The reviewer may request additional information from you or your health care professional. Please note that verification from a licensed health care professional does not automatically qualify you for DART Paratransit's Bus Plus service. Based on the assessment, which includes a review of your responses in the application, you may be found to have:

- Full Eligibility: Eligible for all your travel needs within DART's Bus Plus service zone.
- Conditional Eligibility: Eligible for some trips on Bus Plus depending on the nature of your disability.
- No Eligibility: Not eligible for Bus Plus Paratransit service.

If I receive a response from DART stating I am no longer eligible for Bus Plus Paratransit service, and I disagree with the results, what can I do?

If you are found not eligible for DART's Bus Plus Paratransit services and you disagree with the results, you may appeal the decision. Information on the appeal process will be sent to you with your eligibility determination letter. Additional information about the appeal process is available at ridedart.com/Paratransit.

After submitting my application, I received a response from DART confirming that I am still eligible for Bus Plus Paratransit service. What happens next?

The letter you receive providing the results of the review of your Bus Plus application will also include information on how to continue to utilize the services, now that you are recertified.

Are there any new services or changes to DART Paratransit's Bus Plus offerings?

Effective November 1, 2023, DART Paratransit began providing additional amenities exclusively available for approved Bus Plus riders including 1) a new Premium Service Zone to further extend Bus Plus's coverage area, and 2) free rides on DART's Fixed Route services for Bus Plus riders. Utilizing the free Fixed Route service requires a Bus Plus ID, which can be initiated by contacting DART Customer Service. Additional information about these new services, and how to use them, is available at ridedart.com/Paratransit.