



# DATS News



## Dedicated Accessible Transit Service Fall 2022

### Annual DATS Customer Satisfaction Survey

The City of Edmonton has commissioned Pivotal Research Inc. (independent research firm) to complete the 2022 survey. Feedback is used to assess and improve DATS services. A random sample of DATS users will be provided to Pivotal for the survey (to be completed this month). Survey responses are anonymous and only group data will be reported.

#### Survey Invitation:

If you would like to participate in this survey, please call: (780) 496-4567 (option 4) or email: [DATS@edmonton.ca](mailto:DATS@edmonton.ca) - **deadline is September 16, 2022.**

Note: family, caregivers and program staff are all welcome to participate. Surveys can be done online or by phone (paper on request).

### Fall Travel Safety



As the days turn colder, please dress for Edmonton weather, which can change rapidly within hours. Wear layers for travel on buses that may be drafty as doors are opening and closing, or warm and comfy with the heat at maximum.

Note: In the event of heavy snowfall or poor road conditions, DATS cannot accommodate same-day (on-demand) trips. Poor road conditions delay all transit services, and attempting to accommodate same-day trips only adds to these delays.

At DATS we value safety and teamwork. Help us excel at customer service and stay safe by keeping your ramps, sidewalks, driveways and other surfaces clear of snow or ice this winter. If a clear or safe path is not available, DATS may be unable to provide service until it is clear.

Turn the lights on - so we can find you and provide safer door to door service. As the days get shorter, remember to keep a light on at home if you're expecting a ride in the early morning or evening.

**Edmonton  
Transit  
Service**



# Manager's Message

It was a nice hot summer here in Edmonton and I hope you were able to enjoy some of the many events and activities available again in the community. Our DATS team was happy to provide you with service to your favourite festivals and special events. It was also great to have the 45 new DATS buses in service this summer that have been fitted with air conditioning. The remainder of the Fleet will be replaced by buses with AC over the next three years. This summer Edmonton seniors were also able to get back on the road as part of ETS's seasonal training program, Seniors on the Go (see next page for more information on ETS's travel training opportunities).



Looking ahead to our busy fall season, we are committed to continuing our current high accommodation rates and on-time performance. Typically, service ramps up in September and October after the summer holidays, especially with programs opening. Prior to the pandemic years, we had seen up to 3,500 trips on an average weekday. Our Community Relations team has been working with Facilities and Program providers through the pandemic and are now, once again preparing for the fall increase in demand for trips. Booking trips three days out is still the best way to secure your trip.

On the technology front, we are working on a major upgrade to the computer system that we use to manage all our processes at DATS. For customers, this update brings enhancements to IVR (call ahead notices) and IBook (online booking). We are planning to test some of the new customer service features and may need your help. If you are interested in helping us to test new features or join in a workshop, please contact our Community Relations team at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) or email us at: [DATS@edmonton.ca](mailto:DATS@edmonton.ca)

The ETS team is introducing a new smart fare system, called Arc. Arc is an electronic, account-based transit fare payment system that uses modern technologies for you to purchase and pay for transit trips - including travel on DATS. For more information about using Arc for DATS service, please see the article in this newsletter.

In closing, I would like to mention we have an ongoing policy to thoroughly clean and disinfect our buses. In addition, the City of Edmonton has begun installing HEPA air filters on transit vehicles, including our DATS buses. Our contracted vehicles have been issued the same safety guidelines. And, as always, if you have any questions or concerns about your travel on DATS vehicles, please contact our Community Relations team at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) or email us at: [DATS@edmonton.ca](mailto:DATS@edmonton.ca)

**Paul Schmold, Manager Paratransit**



# ETS Travel Training

## ETS: Seniors On The Go (SOTG)

Edmonton seniors were back on the road this summer as Seniors on the Go resumed. This annual program provides a free orientation to transit for seniors who are not familiar with public transit or who need a refresher. The program offers an overview of transit services, covering key topics including transit information and trip planning, fares, and important accessibility and safety features of the transit system.

In 2022, SOTG welcomed groups with a range of mobility levels with sessions adapted to their needs and interests. Participants from seniors groups were able to visit and enjoy local destinations and activities such as the 4D film at the Pehonan Theatre at the Legislature, exploring the botanical gardens at The Muttart, relaxing beside the fountains at Churchill Square, and checking out the Royal Alberta Museum. Participants said they found travel training presentations and outings to be beneficial, and felt more likely to access public transit as a result of this program.

SOTG is a seasonal program available in the summer months. If you know of a group who may benefit from transit orientation through the rest of the year, please contact Vicki Gudelj, Accessibility Coordinator, at (780) 496-3000 (see next column for more information).

## Mobility Choices

Mobility Choices in-person travel training is also back. The program is free, open year-round and is aimed at current and potential transit users who need extra support and instruction to learn to use regular ETS bus, LRT, and On-Demand services independently and with confidence, including people with disabilities, seniors, and newcomers.

Would you like to learn more about ETS services and programs, including trip planning options, fares and fare programs, and important accessibility and safety features? Instruction is tailored to personal needs and abilities, including one-on-one training on the transit system for those who need more individualized attention and guided practice on the system.

Other hands-on learning includes guided trial and practice of mobility aids on not-in-service transit buses as well as sessions focused on trip planning and electronic trip planning tools.



**For more information on customer travel training opportunities, please contact Vicki Gudelj, Accessibility Coordinator (780) 496-3000.**



# Holiday Booking Schedule

## National Day for Truth & Reconciliation: Friday, September 30

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Client Services Centre will be closed) on Friday, September 30, 2022.



Note: Subscription bookings will be cancelled on September 30, 2022. If you still require your subscription booking on Sept 30, call (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sept 25	Sept 26	Sept 27	Sept 28	Sept 29	Sept 30	Oct 1
<b>Sept 30, 2022</b> <b>National Day</b> <b>for Truth &amp; Reconciliation</b>		Can book for Sept 28 (till noon), Sept 29, 30, Oct 1	Can book for Sept 29 (till noon), Sept 30, Oct 1, 2	Can book for Sept 30, Oct 1 (till noon), Oct 2, 3	<b>HOLIDAY</b> Client Services Closed Subscription Trips Cancelled	<i>Regular Booking Schedule resumes</i>

## Thanksgiving Day: Monday, October 10

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Client Services Centre will be closed) on Monday, October 10, 2022.

Note: Subscription bookings will be cancelled on Monday, October 10, 2022. If you still require your subscription booking on Oct 10, call (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Oct 2	Oct 3	Oct 4	Oct 5	Oct 6	Oct 7	Oct 8
<b>October 10, 2022</b> <b>Thanksgiving Day</b> 					Can book for October 8 (till noon), October 9, 10, 11	Can book for October 9, 10, 11, 12 (till noon)
Oct 9	Oct 10	Oct 11	Oct 12	Oct 13	Oct 14	Oct 15
Can book for October 10, 11, 12, 13 (till noon)	<b>HOLIDAY</b> Client Services Closed Subscription Trips Cancelled	<i>Regular Booking Schedule resumes</i>	 <b>Booking Tip - Call over the weekend!</b> Avoid calling on busy Mondays - call to book your trips over the weekend for the following Tues/Wed! The call centre is open (7:30am to 12:00 noon) on weekends. This also helps us to keep up with the call volume on Mondays.			

# Holiday Booking Schedule

## Remembrance Day: Friday, November 11

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Client Services Centre will be closed) on Friday, Nov 11, 2022.

Note: Subscription bookings will be cancelled on Friday, November 11, 2022. If you still require your subscription booking on Nov 11 call (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 6	Nov 7	Nov 8	Nov 9	Nov 10	Nov 11	Nov 12
<b>Nov 11, 2022 Remembrance Day</b>		Can book for Nov 9 (till noon), Nov 10, 11, 12	Can book for Nov 10 (till noon), Nov 11, 12, 13	Can book for Nov 11, 12 (till noon), Nov 13, 14	<b>HOLIDAY</b> Client Services Closed Subscription Trips Cancelled	<i>Regular Booking Schedule resumes</i>



## Call Before You Buy New Equipment!

If you are considering new equipment for travel use on DATS, please contact Community Relations at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) first to make sure it can be safely secured on our DATS vehicles and contracted vehicles.

## Lost and Found

ETS handles all lost and found items on DATS. Call ETS Lost and Found at (780) 496-1622.

## Community Notes

### Assisted Waste Program

Winter is coming! The City's Waste Services offers an assisted waste collection service for customers who have difficulty getting their recycling or garbage to the curb or lane. Staff can collect or help set out waste from outside the front or back door of the home.

There is no additional charge for this service.

To apply: Fill out and submit the online application form ([edmonton.ca](http://edmonton.ca) - search 'assisted waste'). You can also apply via telephone by calling 311.

# DATS Advisory Group (DAG)

After a break for the summer, the DAG team is back at DATS. We are updating our work plan for the year to discuss our priorities at our September meeting. Here are a few of our plans so far:

- ▶ Continuing to invite guest speakers to our meetings. The more we know about DATS, the better we can provide our support and feedback as an advisory group.
- ▶ Holding our elections and setting up our subcommittees to maximize the work we can do.
- ▶ Getting to understand the new technology and customer tools coming in and how they impact us. How can we support DATS users in making the best use of these new tools? We will be helping to test this technology.

Note: If you are interested in finding out more about DAG or volunteering to join us - please email us at [DAG@edmonton.ca](mailto:DAG@edmonton.ca). Applications are reviewed at the DAG Monthly meetings. Thank you for your interest in this valuable opportunity!

## What is DAG?

The DATS Advisory Group (DAG) is made up of a team of volunteers who provide advice to Edmonton Transit in the planning and operation of DATS, and in the development of other transportation policies and programs that affect persons with disabilities.

If you have a question, comment or suggestion for the DAG committee, please email: [DAG@edmonton.ca](mailto:DAG@edmonton.ca), or call DATS Community Relations at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) and leave them a message to pass on to us.

## DATS NOTES

### Community Outreach

Now that things are opening up once again, our team is looking forward to participating in some outreach and Community events. Meeting clients, caregivers and agency staff members is a great way to share information about DATS and our policies and to build relationships in the future.

### Agencies and Programs

If you would like to learn more about DATS services and policies or to find out how we can help your team to make better use of DATS, please contact the DATS Community Relations Team: call (780) 496-4567 (option 4). If you prefer to email, then send a note to: [DATS@Edmonton.ca](mailto:DATS@Edmonton.ca)

## Same Day Trip Requests

Demand for trips on DATS is increasing, please keep in mind that there is no guarantee that we can fulfill your Same Day Trip requests. Booking trips three days out is still the best way to improve your chances of securing your trip.

## Phone Note



Phone calls into DATS are recorded for quality assurance and training purposes. DATS uses the recordings to ensure we are providing the very best customer service.

ETS is introducing a new smart fare system, called Arc. Arc is an electronic, account-based transit fare payment system that uses modern technologies for you to purchase and pay for transit trips - including travel on DATS (at a later date). ETS is planning to test this technology on regular bus and LRT service by the end of 2022.

Note: Once Smart Fare is working successfully on ETS regular service, it will be rolled out to be used on DATS service in 2023. Watch for an update in the next DATS Newsletter.

### How to use Arc on DATS

Every time you board a DATS vehicle, tap your Arc card or ticket on the validator - a handheld device used by DATS operators.

### Arc benefits for DATS Clients

- Increased customer experience and convenience
- Reduces the amount of cash
- Supports stored value, pay-as-you-go

### Arc Products

- Arc Card: will be linked to your account which will store your money
- Arc Ticket: a limited use ticket, discarded after use

### Where to buy Arc Cards and Load Money to Your Account

- Online
- Arc Call Centre
- Arc fare vending machine
- Retail Outlets
- In-Person Service Centres



### Questions?

If you have questions, please call our DATS Community Relations Team at: (780) 496-4567 (option 4) or email us at: [DATS@edmonton.ca](mailto:DATS@edmonton.ca)

### DATS Buses and Taxis

DATS uses a fleet of City of Edmonton owned buses, and contracted vehicles (minivans and taxi sedans) to provide DATS service. Vehicles used are identified as "DATS" vehicles with magnetic signs. Please always check the vehicle is a DATS vehicle and that the driver correctly identifies you when they arrive to pick you up.

### Service Note

Door to door service applies to service on all DATS vehicles, including taxis. DATS requires all drivers to escort clients between the vehicle and the first set of accessible doors. If your driver does not provide door to door service, call us at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) and let us know.

### Trip Cancellations

If you have booked trips you no longer need, please phone DATS as soon as possible to cancel these trips. Although two hours is the minimum cancellation notice required, by giving us as much notice as you can, trips can be made available for other clients.

If you need to cancel your DATS trip, please call (780) 496-4567 (option 1). Thanks!

## DATS News, Fall 2022

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### **Please direct comments/submissions to:**

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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:  
[dats@edmonton.ca](mailto:dats@edmonton.ca). Or call us  
(780) 496-4567.

# Contact DATS

## **DATS Client Service Centre**

(780) 496-4567

- ▶ Cancel a trip or check on a late ride: Press 1
- ▶ Book or change a trip: Press 2
- ▶ Register for DATS: Press 3
- ▶ 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.

### **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.

**Edmonton  
Transit  
Service**

**Edmonton**

Return undeliverable Canadian address to:

## **DATS**

**Percy Wickman Garage**

**5610 86 Street NW**

**Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2X3**

post office indicia here