



DATS News



Dedicated Accessible Transit Service Summer 2022

Stay in Touch Sign up for Email!

Email is a convenient way to stay connected and is timely and saves on paper!

If you would like to receive communications like the DATS Newsletter or Customer Bulletins electronically, please email us at: DATS@Edmonton.ca or call the DATS Registration Team at (780) 496-4567 (option 3) to sign up for email communications.

Safety Note Door to Door Service

DATS requires all operators to escort clients between the vehicle and the first set of accessible doors. If your operator does not provide door to door service, call us at (780) 496-4567 (option 4) and let us know!

**Edmonton
Transit
Service**

Edmonton

DATS Notes



Covid-19

We continue to monitor the Covid-19 situation and remain committed to your safety and the safety of our team. We continue to thoroughly sanitize our vehicles, screen our team members as they come to work and follow any changes made by our local, provincial and federal governments. The City of Edmonton is also installing HEPA air filters on all transit vehicles, including our DATS buses.

Percy Wickman Garage

The DATS office is open to the public again. Regular office hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm and closed on evenings, holidays and weekends.

Same Day Trip Requests

As the weather improves, and demand for trips on DATS increases, 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.

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 more notice, trips can be made available for other clients to use. If you need to cancel your DATS trip, call (780) 496-4567 (option 1).

Fragrances

DATS is a shared ride service, so please avoid using scented products on our vehicles.

Manager's Message

We are all looking forward to summer, and getting out to enjoy our community and the summer events that Edmonton has to offer. Our Operations folks are working closely with the Civic Events Implementation Team to make sure we are ready to provide service for the special events planned around the City. DATS Operations Supervisors work with event planners to check accessibility and find the best spots to drop-off and pick-up clients, and determine how our vehicles can safely access each location. DATS team members then plan how many vehicles and operators we need to provide service and add those trip options into the computer system - ready for you to book.

Summer is also a good time to try out the various accessible options that regular transit offers. If you have questions, or need support, ETS has Transit orientation for groups and individuals to help. 'Mobility Choices' is an in-person customer travel training program designed to give you the information, assistance and support you need. See this newsletter for details. And, don't forget - a fare paying DATS registrant can take along a friend or family member for free on ETS regular service - just show your DATS Reg Card to the Operator.

As part of our plan to keep up with the demand for trips, we are using taxis for some service. This gives us the flexibility to add service during peak periods where customers need the extra trips. Our Contract Coordinator has been working with the contractors and taxi providers to provide new drivers with accessibility awareness and training to provide the door to door DATS service. If you have any concerns about service on the road (DATS vehicles or taxi), please contact our team at (780) 496-4567 (option 4). DATS is also posting for 25 new DATS Operators over the next nine months to help maintain a full team of operators.

In order to make best use of our resources, DATS is also continuing to enforce our cancellation policy, as an industry best-practice. Our goal is to reduce cancellations in order to better serve all clients. We understand that some cancellations are unavoidable, so we introduced a system to allocate and track cancellation points. We monitor all cancellations (no shows, cancels at the door and late cancellations) and alert clients who have accumulated a high number of points. As always, if you need to cancel, please provide as much notice as possible - this can free up resources to deliver trips for other clients and helps us better plan our service.

This summer we would normally be getting ready for our bi-annual Open House here at DATS. Due to uncertainty around Covid-19, we have decided not to hold an Open House this year. We look forward to meeting our customers face to face again when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, our Community Relations Team is hoping to get involved in some community outreach and build those vital working relationships with our agency and program staff when possible. See the feature article in this issue all about our Community Relations team. Please reach out to them if you would like to learn more about DATS services and policies. As always, we are committed to making sure customer service remains a top priority, along with safety, in 2022 and beyond.



Paul Schmold, Manager Paratransit DATS



DATS Service Delivery Report

Here is our first quarter DATS Service Delivery Report (January, February and March, 2022).

We have included previous years' numbers as well so you can see how they compare to pre-pandemic and mid-pandemic times.

The number of total trips delivered has risen since last year, and we expect to see that number continue to increase steadily. On time performance remains high and is within service standards. Overall accommodation rates are high and also within service standards, especially for those trips booked in advance.

Quarterly Reporting (Q1)	2022	2021	2020	2019
Total Trips Delivered	119,156	65,935	213,335	240,541
On-time Performance	93.3%	98.6%	91.3%	91.1%
Accommodation Rate (overall)	98.1%	99.4%	98.8%	94.2%
Accommodation Rate (advance)	99.9%	99.9%	99.5%	93.5%



Mobility Options on ETS!

After a long pause due to COVID, ETS is restarting in-person customer travel training and orientation again. Mobility Choices and Seniors on the Go programs are back, a bit modified, as our community gets back into the swing of things post-pandemic. ETS customer travel training helps folks who need extra information and instructional support to learn to use regular transit services.

Participants will learn about ETS's regular bus, LRT and On Demand transit services, about important accessibility and safety features, fares and fare programs, how to get transit information and plan trips, practice using mobility equipment on regular transit, and more! Sessions are geared to the needs and abilities of participants.

In addition to customer travel training through Mobility Choices which is available year-round, we are also bringing back the summer Seniors on the Go program, which gives seniors who are new to regular transit or have not been on transit for a long time a gentle introduction to regular transit services with opportunity to try transit for an outing arranged by the group.

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


Holiday Booking Schedule



Canada Day (Friday, July 1, 2022)

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (Client Services Centre closed) on Friday, July 1, 2022. Subscription bookings will be cancelled on Friday, July 1, 2022.


Booking Note: If you still require your subscription booking on Friday, July 1, call us at (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June 26	June 27	June 28	June 29	June 30	July 1	July 2
July 1, 2022 Canada Day 		Can book for June 29 (till noon) June 30, July 1, July 2	Can book for June 30 (till noon) July 1, July 2, July 3	Can book for July 1, July 2 (till noon) July 3, July 4, July 5	HOLIDAY Client Services Closed Subscription Trips Cancelled	<i>Regular Booking Schedule resumes</i>

Civic Holiday (Monday, August 1, 2022)

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (Client Services Centre closed) on Monday, August 1, 2022. Subscription bookings will be cancelled on Monday, August 1, 2022.

Booking Note: If you still require your subscription booking on August 1, call us at (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to book it.


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 24	July 25	July 26	July 27	July 28	July 29	July 30
August 1, 2022 Civic Holiday					Can book for July 30 (till noon) July 31, Aug 1, Aug 2	Can book for July 31, Aug 1 (till noon) Aug 2, Aug 3, Aug 4
July 31	Aug 1	Aug 2	Aug 3	Aug 4	Aug 5	Aug 6
Can book for Aug 1, Aug 2 (till noon) Aug 3, Aug 4, Aug 5	HOLIDAY Client Services Closed Subscription Trips Cancelled	<i>Regular Booking Schedule resumes</i>				

Holiday Booking Schedule

Labour Day (Monday, September 5, 2022)

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (Client Services Centre closed) on Monday, September 5, 2022. Subscription bookings will be cancelled on Monday, September 5, 2022.

Booking Note: If you still require your subscription booking on Monday, September 5, call us at (780) 496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 28	Aug 29	Aug 30	Aug 31	Sept 1	Sept 2	Sept 3
September 5, 2022 Labour Day					Can book for Sept 3 (till noon) Sept 4, Sept 5, Sept 6	Can book for Sept 4, Sept 5 (till noon) Sept 6, Sept 7, Sept 8
Sept 4	Sept 5	Sept 6	Sept 7	Sept 8	Sept 9	Sept 10
Can book for Sept 5, Sept 6 (till noon) Sept 7, Sept 8, Sept 9	HOLIDAY Client Services Closed Subscription Trips Cancelled	<i>Regular Booking Schedule resumes</i>	 Booking Tip - Call over the weekend! 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.			

Equipment on DATS

Call before you buy!

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.

Note: All wheelchairs, walkers, and scooters must meet the specific size, weight, and safety guidelines for DATS travel.



DATS Advisory Group (DAG)

At our April meeting, we had a guest speaker - Jason - the Team Lead in Community Relations. It was a great session which gave us a better understanding of what that team does and learn more about how they do their jobs. In fact, we thought it would be great to include a feature in this newsletter as well for our fellow customers - please see this issue for more about the DATS Community Relations Team. In May, we had our first meeting back at the Wickman Garage - it was great to be back and meet a few of the folks at DATS and also to meet with some members face to face.

Thinking of trying out regular ETS bus service over the summer? In this newsletter, there is information about the ETS travel training program - available to help anyone interested in learning more about accessible travel on regular transit.

Current Projects

- ▶ 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 may be called upon to help test this technology.

What is the DATS Advisory Group all about?

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.

There are 12 members appointed for two year terms.

- ▶ 6 User Reps (Lydia, Liz, Gordon, Yasmin, Maureen, one vacant)
- ▶ 5 Agency Reps (Elsa: Chrysalis, Laura: Elves Special Needs Society, Bindu: Council of India Societies of Edmonton, Katrina: Paralympic Sports Association, one vacant)
- ▶ 1 Community-at-large Representative (pending).

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

Volunteers Wanted!

User Representative

DAG is looking for a motivated individual to be a member of their voluntary advisory committee and provide input based on their experience of using DATS services and must be a registered DATS user. DAG User Representatives must commit to being a member for two years and require access to email in order to fully participate in a timely manner.

Agency Representatives

DAG is looking for a new Agency Representative to join the committee. Agency Reps are required to provide input, on behalf of their agency, based on their staff and customer experiences with DATS Service. DAG Agency Representatives must commit to two years and require access to email in order to fully participate in a timely manner.

DAG Meetings

Meetings are typically held the second Tuesday of each month from 4:30 to 5:30 PM. Meetings are now held in person at the Percy Wickman Garage (light refreshments), but virtual attendance is also available.

Applying to Join DAG

To find out more, email us at DAG@edmonton.ca or contact Shirley at (780) 496-4554. Applications are reviewed at the DAG Monthly meetings. Thank you for your interest in this valuable opportunity!

DATS Team Profile - Community Relations

Small Team, Big Hearts!

Community Relations is made up of a team of three people - Jason (Team Lead), Colleen and Diane. We bring a combined total of 34 years experience at DATS - working in communications, planning, the Call Centre and in the Community Relations office.

What do we do?

We are the team that answers your questions about DATS and responds to your concerns and commendations. If you have a question about our policies, want to learn more about customer tools that are available, need to reset your password for online booking - give us a call. Similarly, if you are unhappy with your DATS experience, please contact us and we can see what we can do to help.

We take all customer feedback very seriously. Our process is to listen first and make sure we understand your concerns and then handle any immediate needs. Next, we enter concerns in our database for follow up, and investigate with our team to find out as much as we can about what happened. For example, we can research a specific trip by speaking with the operator involved, checking with our Dispatch and Call Centre teams and even looking at the GPS and other trip details on the computer. Then of course, we follow up with you and record our findings.

Sometimes this process results in a need to review the incident further with our Service Delivery and Management Teams and sometimes, we need to work with the customer to see how we can resolve the situation moving forward. In many cases, we are proud to be able to come up with solutions and help customers to improve their experience with DATS.

We all like to hear that we're doing a good job!

Your feedback lets us know what we're doing right. If you see something good happening out on the road, please let us know - you are our ears and ears out there! Then we can let our team members know their efforts and services are appreciated. The same goes for our administrative team - if you receive excellent customer



service in our Call Centre, please let us know and we will be sure to pass along your appreciation. Feedback helps us to build even stronger customer service in the future.

DATS in the Community

Now that things are opening up once again, our team is looking forward to participating in some outreach and Community events. Please let us know if you have an event or open house at your facility in the future that we can attend. Meeting our 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.

Contact Us

DATS Community Relations Team:
call (780) 496-4567 (option 4). If
you prefer to email, then send us a
note to: DATS@Edmonton.ca

Summer Event DATS Service

The summer special event season in “Festival City” is back! Here is a short list of some of the popular events that we are ready to take you to:

- ▶ Freewill Shakespeare Festival: June 14-July 10
- ▶ PrideFest: June 25
- ▶ Garth Brooks: June 24-25
- ▶ Jazz Fest: June 29-July 3
- ▶ Canada Day Fireworks: July 1
- ▶ Street Performers: July 8-17
- ▶ A Taste of Edmonton: July 21-31
- ▶ K-Days: July 22-31
- ▶ Triathlon: July 23-24
- ▶ Heritage Festival: July 29-Aug 1
- ▶ Folk Music Festival: Aug 4-7
- ▶ Cariwest: Aug 5-7
- ▶ Fringe: Aug 11-21
- ▶ Edmonton Blues Festival: Aug 11-21
- ▶ Rock Fest: August
- ▶ ELKS Football: Commonwealth Stadium



Phone Calls to DATS

Please note that 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.

Notes

Assisted Waste Program

Did you know? 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 - search 'assisted waste').

You can also apply via telephone by calling 311.

Lost and Found

Please take all your belongings with you when exiting the vehicle.

All personal articles should be labeled, as this helps to recover your belongings.

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

Published by DATS, four times annually
Circulation 6,500.

Please direct comments/submissions to:

DATS, Wickman Garage
5610-86 Street, Edm, AB T6E 2X3
Phone: (780) 496-4567
Fax: (780) 496-1008
Edmonton Transit Service:
www.takeETS.com
E-mail: dats@edmonton.ca

Editor: Caroline Wenzel

Contributors this Issue

Paul Schmold, Jason Magee,
Shirley Masterson, Glenda
Roberts, Kerri Harris, DATS
Advisory Group, Vicki Gudelj,
Cathy Paplawski.

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 - please put
"DATS Newsletter" in the subject
line. 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 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