



**UPDATED**

**CALL-A-RIDE SAIPAN (CARS) RIDERS GUIDE**

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Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority

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Saipan, MP 96950



## **RIDERS GUIDE**

### **DISCLAIMERS**

- The Call-A-Ride Saipan Riders Guide may contain omissions or errors. The Guide is not legal advice, and it does not create any legal obligation on the part of anyone. In the event of a conflict between the Guide and any law, policy, or contractual obligation of CARS through COTA, the law, policy, or contract will prevail.
- Call-A-Ride Saipan does not compensate riders for their expenses or losses due to any problem with the service, nor is CARS through COTA liable for any inconvenience or expense caused as a result of using the program.
- Service with CARS through COTA is provided primarily with lift vans, although other types of vehicles are occasionally used, as appropriate. Assignment to a vehicle is exclusively at Call-A-Ride Saipan's discretion.

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## **Introduction**

**Call-A-Ride Saipan is a demand response shared ride service. Call-A-Ride Saipan transports riders in buses, or in vans equipped with a wheelchair lift. Call-A-Ride Saipan was established by the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority to meet requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).**

**This Rider's Guide describes how to use the Call-A-Ride Saipan. Think of the Guide as the “Driver’s Manual” for riders. You should carefully read this Guide to learn the “rules of the road”.**

**Call-A-Ride Saipan publishes brochures on different aspects of the service. Please contact COTA for a listing of the brochures.**

## **To Caregivers and Social Service Agencies**

This document was written for all riders and is phrased as if the rider is reading the document. We know that many caregivers and others will assume the responsibility of reading and understanding this information as well as making reservations and other arrangements for the rider.

### **CONTACTING CALL-A-RIDE SAIPAN IS EASY:**

**Call (670) 664-2690**

**[www.cota.gov.mp](http://www.cota.gov.mp)**

**[cnmicallaride@gmail.com](mailto:cnmicallaride@gmail.com)**

## **Eligibility**

To use Call-A-Ride Saipan Paratransit Eligibility, you must apply through the Eligibility Certification Process and be found eligible for the service. The process for new applicants includes both a paper application and at times an in-person interview. If you are eligible, you will receive a letter that explains your eligibility and what kind of service you will receive. If you have questions about eligibility, call Call-A-Ride Saipan.

## **Full Eligibility**

If you are never able to use the COTA regular transit buses without having another person there to help you, you will have full eligibility for paratransit. That means you will be allowed to take all your transit trips on paratransit. You may choose to travel on the COTA regular transit buses when you can, for example when traveling with an attendant.

## **Conditional (Limited) Eligibility**

If the Eligibility Certification Section determines you are able to use the COTA regular transit buses independently for some trips, but not others, you will be given conditional eligibility. You will be allowed to take some of your trips using Call-A-Ride Saipan service. We will explain which trips you may take on Call-A-Ride Saipan, and which trips you should plan to take on regular transit. We may refuse to provide a paratransit trip that you are able to take on COTA regular transit buses.

## **Temporary Eligibility**

If your disability is temporary or your health is expected to improve, you will be given paratransit eligibility for a limited time, after which you are expected to return to using COTA regular transit buses.

## **Length of Paratransit Eligibility**

Your eligibility to use Call-A-Ride Saipan service is assigned for a period of two (2) years. You must reapply every two (2) years for continuous service, regardless of your eligibility status.

Reapplication is required even when your disability is permanent and unchanging. Call-A-Ride Saipan will send instructions to you on how to re-apply before (30) days expiration.

## **Visitor Eligibility**

Visitor requests are handled by our eligibility department. Visitors can use Call-A-Ride Saipan for up to twenty-one (21) days in a twelve (12) month period after presenting either a valid ADA Paratransit card or other paperwork showing they are certified for ADA paratransit services.

We also grant visitor service to individuals whose disability is visibly apparent, such as users of wheelchairs, white canes, or service animals, or who present information that are unable to use the fixed route system. We request a form of identification, if possible, in order to create a profile on our database for the rider.

The Eligibility Certification Section accepts a variety of documentation – such as a copy of an ID card, an email from a home agency, or other identification with the rider’s name and address. For those whose disability is not apparent, basic forms of disability documentation are accepted.

### **Bringing Other People**

ADA eligible riders, their personal care attendants, and their companions are allowed to use the Call-A-Ride Saipan service. Both personal care attendants and companions must travel to and from the same locations as the eligible rider they are traveling with. You must make reservations for them when you make the reservation for yourself.

### **Companions**

A companion is a friend, relative, or other person who is traveling with you, but is not coming along primarily to help you. You must make a reservation for your companion when you make your own reservation. You can always take one companion, but additional companions can only be added on the day of service if there is room. Companions pay the same fare as you to ride Call-A-Ride Saipan.

## **Personal Care Attendants**

A personal care attendant is someone you need to help you perform daily activities, such as eating, dressing, personal hygiene, or finding your way. When you apply for Call-A-Ride Saipan, you will be asked about your need for a personal care attendant. Personal care attendants pay no fare when they ride with you. Only one (1) personal care attendant is allowed to ride with you at any time.

**Call-A-Ride Saipan reserves the right to contact your health care professional to verify your need for an attendant.**

**Fraudulently claiming to travel with an attendant to avoid paying a fare for a companion may result in suspension of service.**

## **SERVICE AREA**

Call-A-Ride Saipan service is available only within all areas of the island of Saipan of the Northern Marianas Islands as shown in the map below pending accessibility and safety of transit vehicles. Transit Operators are trained and responsible for making decisions if roads or driveways are safe to proceed.

## Map of Service Area

### Call-A-Ride Saipan

Serves the following villages:



- As Perdido
- As Teo
- As Terlaje
- As Gonno
- Capitol Hill
- ChalanKonoa
- ChalanKiya
- Chalan Lau
- Chalan Piao
- Chinatown
- Dandan
- Fina Sisu
- Garapan
- Gualo Rai
- Kagman
- Kannat Tabla
- Koblerville
- Lower Base
- Marpi
- Navy Hill
- Obyan
- Papago
- Puerto Rico
- Sadog Tasi
- San Antonio
- San Roque
- San Jose/Oleai
- San Vicente
- Susupe
- Tanapag

- Achugao
- As Mahetog
- As Lito
- As Matius

You can also go to, from, and between any of these villages in Saipan.

You can go elsewhere in the Saipan Area, beyond these villages by transferring to other ADA paratransit services.

## FARES

When you make a reservation for a trip on Call-A-Ride Saipan, you will be told the fare for your trip. You must pay your fare as soon as you get into the vehicle. You may pay in cash, with tickets, or with a combination of the two. If you are paying with cash, bring exact change only. Tickets are available in \$5.00 or \$3.00 denominations all fares are due upon entering the COTA van or bus. COTA has the right to refuse service when no cash or tickets are presented.

### ONE WAY FARES

<b>For service in the Saipan Areas</b>	
<b>Fares</b>	<b>One Way</b>
General Public (ages 12+)	\$5.00
Elderly 55 Years & Over	\$3.00
Medically Approved Disabilities	\$3.00
Veterans	\$3.00
Students with valid I.D.	\$1.00
Children (ages 4-11)	\$1.00
Infant (ages 3 and below)	FREE

## **Purchasing Tickets**

You can buy books of Call-A-Ride Saipan tickets at the following location(s)  
in person:

**Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority,  
Caller Box 10007  
Saipan, MP 96950**

**Administrative Office  
Hours / Days**

**WEEKDAYS  
7:30am to 4:30pm**

**WEEKENDS AND CNMI LEGAL HOLIDAYS  
Closed**

**Service Hours / Days**

ADA paratransit is designed as a direct substitute for the regular bus or  
fixed-route bus service. **Call-A-Ride Saipan's service hours are:**

**WEEKDAYS  
6:30am to 10:00pm  
(Last pick up at 10:00 pm)**

**WEEKENDS AND CNMI LEGAL HOLIDAYS  
6:30am to 8:00pm  
(Last pick up at 8:00 pm)**

The Call-A-Ride Saipan, One-Call/One-Click Service Center will tell you if paratransit will be available for any particular trip you might want to make.

**Note: In some Instances, COTA may be closed due to Professional Development (PD) training. A public notice will be placed in all COTA vehicles and/or communicated by a transit information specialist up to two (2) weeks prior to the date of the scheduled training.**

## **RESERVATIONS**

Same-day reservations are accepted based on availability. Reservations are made on the phone to the Call-A-Ride Saipan, One-Call/One-Click Transportation Information Resource Center. Reservation calls are accepted from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 6:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday, and CNMI Legal Holidays. You can make a reservation up to two (2) business days before the desired ride.

### **Information You Must Provide**

Either you or your caregiver can call to make a reservation for you. A Transit Information Specialist will enter your request into our reservation system, which will assign your trip to a vehicle. Have this information ready to make a reservation:

- Your name, home address, and phone number
- The address where we will pick you up.
- The address where we will drop you off.
- Any special instructions that the driver may need, such as gate codes, directions to a hard-to-find door, etc.
- The date you want to travel.
- The time you want to be picked up or the time you want to be dropped

off at your destination.

- Whether you are traveling with a personal care attendant or a companion.
- Whether you are traveling with a service animal.
- Whether you will be using a mobility aid such as a wheelchair, walker, or scooter.

## **You Reservation Request**

You have the option of requesting a reservation based either on the pick-up time you want or on the time you want to be dropped off at your destination. If you want to be dropped off at a particular time, the reservation system will calculate a pick-up time for you. It will take into consideration traffic and the fact that other riders may be picked up and dropped off along the way.

The Transit Information Specialist will offer you the best reservation time possible. However, the exact pick-up time you want may not be available. The Transit Information Specialist is only allowed to check a limited number of different times for your reservation if you are not happy with the times initially offered.

## **Pick-Up Window**

When you make a reservation, you will be told a thirty (30) minute range of time during which you can expect the Call-A-Ride Saipan service vehicle to arrive to pick you up. This 30- minute period is called a “pick-up window”. Your vehicle may arrive at any time during the 30-minute “pick-up window”.

## **Shared Rides**

Call-A-Ride Saipan service is a “shared-ride” service. This means that other riders with different destinations will be picked up and dropped off along the way and the routing is not necessarily linear. Your trip may take longer than if you took a taxi or drove yourself. Your ride may take a similar amount of time as the same trip would take on a fixed route system including transfers and wait times.

## **Vehicle Types**

Service on Call-A-Ride Saipan is provided with accessible lift vans, although other types of vehicles are occasionally used, as appropriate. Assignment to a vehicle is exclusively at Call-A-Ride Saipan’s discretion.

## **Standby**

In a few cases, the Transit Information Specialist may be unable to find a vehicle with space for your trip while you are on the phone. In this case you will be asked, “Do you want to be put on standby?” If you say yes, the staff will keep a record of your trip request. A reservation will be made for you that is within one hour or so of the time you requested when you were on the phone. You must call the One-Call/One-Click Service Center at **(670) 664-2690** to confirm whether or not this is still available for you.

## **Calling with Questions**

The One-Call/One-Click Service Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays, and Legal Holidays regarding questions about your reservation or your trip. Please call 664-2690

## **Changing Your Reservations**

Requests for changes on the day of your trip **can** be accommodated.

Do not ask the driver to make changes to your trip, such as dropping you off at a different location/address. Drivers are not allowed to make changes to the trips they are assigned nor are they authorized to take in a reservation(s).

## **Canceling a trip**

Cancel a trip you do not plan to take as soon as you are aware that you do not want it. You can call to cancel at any time during reservation hours as listed in this document or simply leave a voicemail message indicating the time and the date for documentation purposes. If it is not during business hours, your message will be recorded.

## **TAKING YOUR PARATRANSIT TRIP**

### **Pick Up**

Remember, when you make your reservation, the Transit Information Specialist will confirm your trip by giving you a thirty (30) minute “pick up window” Your vehicle may arrive to pick you up at any time during the window, but you must be ready to leave and go to the vehicle at the beginning of your pick-up window.

**It is your responsibility to wait when you will be able to tell that the vehicle has arrived. Drivers are not allowed to leave sight of their vehicle.** At most they can announce their arrival at your door or at the lobby of a building, if that can be done without leaving a vehicle unsupervised with riders aboard. Service is curb-to-curb with door-to-door services provided upon request.

## **5 Minute Rule**

Be ready! The driver is allowed to wait only five (5) minutes for you! It is your responsibility to be ready to take your trip. If you do not meet the vehicle when it arrives, your driver will attempt to find you and Call-A-Ride Saipan will attempt to telephone you. If you cannot be located or choose not to start boarding within five (5) minutes, the driver may leave and continue their next pick-up. If you miss your pick-up, there may be a substantial wait for another pick-up from Call-A-Ride Saipan. In addition, you may be penalized for failing to take your trip.

## **Early Pick-up's**

Sometimes your vehicle will arrive before the beginning of the window because of a cancellation or especially light traffic. If your vehicle arrives before the pick-up window, you may wait to get on the vehicle until the start of your confirmed pick-up window, or you may get into the vehicle and leave right away. It is your choice.

## **Late Pick-up's**

Sometimes your vehicle may be late picking you up. If your vehicle has not arrived by the end of the pick-up window, you can telephone Call-A-Ride Saipan to find out the estimated arrival time. If your ride arrives late, you may decline to take the trip and you will not be penalized.

## **Missed Trips**

A missed trip is if the vehicle arrives outside of the pickup window and you do not take it. For example, if the Transit Operator arrives 35 minutes after the scheduled pickup time (that is, five minutes after the end of the 30-minute window), and you are not there or decides not to take the trip, it is coded as a missed trip by Call-A-Ride Saipan. If there is a missed trip by Call-A-Ride Saipan you will not be penalized with a late cancellation or no show.

## **General Policy Statement on No-Shows and Late Cancellation**

Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) understands that because CALL-A-RIDE Saipan requires trips to be scheduled in advance, riders may sometimes miss scheduled rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. COTA also understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely way for reasons that are beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled trips or failing to cancel trips in a timely way can lead to suspension of service. The following information explains COTA's no-show policy.

### **Definitions**

#### **No-show**

A no-show occurs when a rider fails to appear to board the vehicle for a scheduled trip. This presumes the vehicle arrives at the scheduled pickup location within the pickup window and the driver waits at least 5 minutes.

#### **Pickup Window**

The pickup window is defined as from 15 minutes before the scheduled pickup time to 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. Riders must be ready to board a vehicle that arrives within the pickup window. The driver will wait for a maximum of 5 minutes within the pickup window for the rider to appear.

#### **Late Cancellation**

Late Cancellation is defined as either: a cancellation made less than 1 hour before the scheduled pickup time or as a cancellation made at the door or a refusal to board a vehicle that has arrived within the pickup window.

#### **No-Shows Due to Operator Error or to Circumstances Beyond a Rider's Control**

COTA does not count as no-shows or late cancellations any missed trips due to our error, such as:

- Trips placed on the schedule in error
- Pickups scheduled at the wrong pickup location
- Drivers arriving and departing before the pickup window begins
- Drivers arriving late (after the end of the pickup window)
- Drivers arriving within the pickup window, but departing without waiting the required 5 minutes

COTA does not count as no-shows or late cancellations situations beyond a rider's control that prevent the rider from notifying us that the trip cannot be taken, such as:

- Medical emergency
- Family emergency
- Sudden illness or change in condition
- Appointment that runs unexpectedly late without sufficient notice

Riders should contact the CALL-A-RIDE Saipan One-Call One-Click Transportation's Information Center when experiencing no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control.

### **Policy for Handling Subsequent Trips Following No-shows**

When a rider is a no-show for one trip, all subsequent trips on that day remain on the schedule unless the rider specifically cancels the trips. To avoid multiple no-shows on the same day, riders are strongly encouraged to cancel any subsequent trips they no longer need that day.

### **Suspension Policies for a Pattern or Practice of Excessive No-shows and Late Cancellations**

COTA reviews all recorded no-shows and late cancellations to ensure accuracy before recording them in a rider's account.

Each verified no-show or late cancellation consistent with the above definitions counts as 1 penalty point. Riders will be subject to suspension after they meet all of the following conditions:

- Accumulate Eight (8) or more penalty points in one calendar month
- Have booked at least ten (10) trips that month
- Have "no-showed" or "late cancelled" at least 10 percent of those trips

A rider will be subject to suspension only if both the minimum number of trips booked and the minimum number of penalty points are reached during the calendar month. COTA will notify riders by telephone after they have accumulated eight (8) penalty points and would be subject to suspension should they accumulate eight (8) additional penalty points that month consistent with the criteria listed in this section of the policy above.

All suspension notices include a copy of this policy, information on disputing no-shows or late cancellations, and how to appeal suspensions.

All suspensions will begin on a Monday. **The first violation in a calendar year triggers a warning letter but no suspension.** Subsequent violations result in the following suspensions:

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Action</b>
Second violation	7-day (1-week) suspension
Third violation	14-day (2-week) suspension
Fourth violation	21-day (3-week) suspension
Fifth and subsequent violation	28-day (4-week) suspension

### **Policy for Disputing Specific No-Shows or Late Cancellations**

Riders wishing to dispute specific no-shows or late cancellations must do so within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving suspension letters. Riders should contact Call-A-Ride Saipan, One-Call/One-Click Transportation’s Information Center at (670) 664-2690, Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday, Sunday and CNMI Legal Holidays from 6:30 AM to 8:00 p.m. to explain the circumstance and request the removal of the no-show or late cancellation.

### **Policy for Appealing Proposed Suspension**

Riders wishing to appeal suspensions under this policy have the right to file an appeal request, which must be in writing by letter or via email. Riders must submit written appeal requests within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving suspension letters. Riders who miss the appeal request deadline will be suspended from Call-A-Ride Saipan on the date listed on the suspension notice.

All suspensions appeal follows COTA's appeal policy.

## **Appeals**

If you are suspended, you have the right to appeal. You will be sent information about how to appeal with your suspension letter. A panel, consisting of staff from Call-A-Ride Saipan through COTA will hear the appeal.

Riders who appeal a suspension for multiple no-shows and late cancels will be allowed to continue to use Call-A-Ride Saipan pending the outcome of the appeal hearing.

## **Using the Lift**

If you can walk but are picked up by a van and would find using the stairs difficult, you can be taken onboard a vehicle on the lift. Call-A-Ride Saipan vans have rider lifts that meet ADA requirements. All wheelchair-accessible vehicles are equipped with rider lifts or ramps that meet ADA specifications. All lifts will accommodate mobility devices such as wheelchairs and three-wheeled scooters up to 30" by 48" (measured 2 inches above the ground), with a combined weight of up to 800 pounds including the rider. Call-A-Ride Saipan may not be able to transport you if you exceed these standards.

All motorized mobility devices must be turned off at all times once secured in the Call-A-Ride Saipan vehicle. The rider may only turn on their motorized mobility device when the transit operator gives the verbal or physical command for the rider to safely load and unload their motorized mobility device onto the lift.

## **CHILDREN RIDERS**

Children may travel on Call-A-Ride Saipan as eligible riders and as companions. Children pay the same fares as adults. All children until the age of eight, or until they reach a height of 4 feet 9 inches, must travel in a child safety seat in order to comply with the CNMI state law. Parents or

guardians must provide their own child safety seat and take it with them when they exit the vehicle. **Children 13 years and older are allowed to ride by themselves, but must exercise proper rider conduct.**

Call-A-Ride Saipan will not carry a child without a safety seat. Our drivers will help you carry or install your child's safety seat. Drivers are not permitted to lift or carry children.

### **Children as Eligible Riders**

Children whose disability (as opposed to their age) would prevent them from using regular buses by themselves may be eligible for paratransit. Very few children under the age of 5 meet this requirement. However, children under the age of 5 who are eligible must travel with a parent or a personal care attendant. Older eligible children may be required to travel with a personal care attendant if the child is seriously disruptive or presents a safety hazard to themselves or others.

### **Children as Companions**

Eligible riders may bring one child as a companion and may bring additional children if space is available. The rider should call on the day of service to find out if there is room. The eligible rider must be able to manage the child by themselves or with the help of their personal care attendant.

### **Booster Car Seats**

Booster car seats may be brought on the vehicle as needed. If a booster seat is brought on, all riders must use a seatbelt. The booster seat must not surpass the weight of forty (40) pounds. The agency is not liable for any damages to the booster seat during the service.

## **Package-Limitations**

You may only travel with the amount of packages that will fit on your lap or at your feet. Your driver can help you by carrying up to two packages to and from the vehicle that are no larger than grocery bags. You must carry any other packages either by yourself or with the help of an attendant or companion.

## **Life Support Equipment**

You can bring your respirator, portable oxygen, or other life support equipment as long as it does not violate laws or rules related to the transportation of hazardous materials. Your equipment must be small enough to fit into the paratransit vehicle and be managed by you or your personal care attendant.

## **Traveling with Animals**

### **Service Animals**

You may bring your guide dog or other service animal that has been trained to help you with your disability.

The service animal must be under your direct physical control and must be well behaved. It must not soil or damage the vehicle, bark, growl, or act in an aggressive or threatening manner. Your service animal must be in a secure pet carrier, OR on the floor while riding a COTA Vehicle. You must tell the transit information specialist that you are bringing an animal when you make your reservation.

### **Pets**

You may travel with a small pet as long as the animal is fully enclosed in a secure pet carrier that you can manage and hold on your lap or place at your feet.

## **Driver Responsibilities and Behavior**

Call-A-Ride Saipan drivers have many responsibilities. Drivers are **required** to:

- Get out of the vehicle and let you know they have arrived.
- Offer assistance, such as pushing your wheelchair or offering their arm to help you walk safely to the vehicle and assisting you in and out of the vehicle.
- Wear a uniform and a name tag.
- Carry a single small load of packages to or from the vehicle such as two grocery bags.
- Operate the vehicle and lift in a safe manner and safely secure wheelchairs on the vehicle.
- Keep their vehicle in sight when parked if riders are aboard.
- Be courteous at all times.
- Collect the fares listed on their schedule or manifest.
- Give you a receipt for the fare if you want one.
- Carry only the riders assigned to them along with attendants and companions who have reservations.
- Go only to the destinations listed on the manifest or as notified by their dispatcher on duty.
- If a COTA transit operator heads to a new or current rider's residence and is experiencing difficulty entering and/or exiting the rider's driveway and deems it unsafe, the transit operator shall report the unsafe road condition to their respective supervisor for further determination or action.

## **Drivers are NOT ALLOWED to:**

- Enter the rider's residence or go past the lobby of a public building.
- Leave riders in the vehicle unattended.
- Perform any personal care assistance such as assisting riders to dress.
- Smoke, eat, or drink in the vehicle.
- Use a cell phone for personal calls, play loud music, or wear headphones.
- Be rude or harassing to the riders.
- Take information from the rider about cancellations, taking reservations or changes in reservations.
- Accept tips.
- Lift or carry riders or carry wheelchairs up and down steps.

All drivers are trained in basic CPR/First Aid but they are not medical technicians. If there is a medical or health emergency on-board, such as a rider having a seizure or a dialysis patient bleeding, the driver will pull over, and call 911, and wait for trained help.

## **RIDER RESPONSIBILITIES AND BEHAVIOR**

Riders, their companions, and their personal care attendants must be responsible in their use of Call-A-Ride Saipan and follow our rules of conduct to ensure the safety and comfort of all riders and the driver. In order to successfully ride Call-A-Ride Saipan services, riders must be able to comply with the following standards which were developed in consultation with Call-A-Ride Saipan's Commonwealth Public Transportation Advisory Board.

## **Minimal Behaviors required of all Call-A-Ride Saipan Riders**

- Enter and exit the vehicle voluntarily. This means the rider should not require an inordinate amount of coaxing or any force and not require that a specific caregiver or family member be present. The rider must be able to follow the driver's instructions.
- Stay buckled in their seat or wheelchair while the vehicle is moving. The rider must not attempt to move around the vehicle or require supervision from the driver while the vehicle is in motion.
- Not attempt to exit the vehicle whenever it stops: at stop signs, lights, in traffic, while picking up or dropping off other riders, or when the lifter is being tested for safe deployment.
- Be able to refrain from hitting and/or touching other riders, the driver, or the seats of the driver and other riders.
- Refrain from sudden or loud verbal outbursts which could threaten the health of fragile riders or the driver's safe attention on driving.
- Refrain from threats, and/or racial or sexual remarks.
- Not invite sexual attention from the driver or other riders.

## **Caregiver Responsibility**

Some riders are mentally or cognitively impaired or have severe memory problems such that they cannot be safely left on their own at either the pick-up point or the drop-off point. It is the responsibility of the rider's caregivers or family to clearly identify these riders to Call-A-Ride Saipan so that Call-A-Ride Saipan can inform the driver and take appropriate precautions.

However, the driver cannot act as an attendant for these riders. Cognitively impaired riders will be allowed to travel without an attendant only as long as they exhibit safe behavior in the vehicle.

An attendant or caregiver must be present at the pick-up point and at the drop-off point for riders who cannot be left alone. If a responsible attendant or caregiver is not present when the driver attempts to pick-up or drop-off these riders, it can seriously disrupt the driver's schedule. If Call-A-Ride Saipan encounters absences of an attendant or caregiver, service to the rider may be suspended and the situation reported to adult protective services.

### **Rider Behavior**

Riders, companions, and personal care attendants **MUST**:

- Avoid no-shows and late or repeated cancellation of reservations.
- Get aboard the vehicle promptly, remain seated once on board, wear the seat belt, and keep arms, legs, and head inside the vehicle.
- Always pay a fare.

**Riders, companions, and personal care attendants must NOT:**

- Eat, drink, play radios or CD's aloud, or litter on the vehicles.
- Soil the vehicle with bodily fluids or waste or fail to maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene. Passengers are expected to maintain cleanliness and health standards that do not jeopardize the health of transit operators, themselves or other passengers.
- Distract the driver or interfere with the vehicle or equipment.
- Carry fireworks, flammable liquids, or weapons aboard the vehicle.
- Use abusive, threatening, or obscene language to the riders or any Call-A-Ride Saipan staff.
- Commit violent or illegal actions.
- Fraudulently obtain paratransit services for themselves or for others.
- Behave in ways that disrupt and/or distract the service or delay the vehicle

- Harass other riders or Call-A-Ride Saipan staff, including racial, sexual, gender, or age-related harassment.

## **Penalties for Behavior or Fraud**

Suspension is the penalty for offenses involving behavioral issues or fraud. Based on the seriousness and frequency of the offense, penalties generally follow the progressive procedure below. However, immediate indefinite suspension of service may be imposed if that is necessary to preserve the safe operation of Call-A-Ride Saipan.

Unless immediate suspension is warranted, a rider will receive a written or verbal warning before being suspended in order to correct the behavior that is causing the problem or to address fraud committed by the rider:

**\*1<sup>st</sup> Suspension - One week**

**\*2<sup>nd</sup> Suspension- Two weeks**

**\*3<sup>rd</sup> Suspension - Three weeks**

**\*4<sup>th</sup> Suspension - 30 Days**

**\*Any subsequent suspension (past your 4<sup>th</sup> suspension), will result in another 30-day suspension.**

Anyone who commits a physical assault or other illegal act will also be subject to criminal prosecution.

## **Appeals**

If you are suspended, you have the right to appeal. You will be sent information about how to appeal with your suspension letter. A panel consisting of staff from COTA and a member of the CPTAB will hear the appeal.

Call-A-Ride Saipan executive staff will decide on a case-by-case basis whether a rider who has appealed a suspension can use the service pending

the outcome of the appeal hearing. This decision will be based on consideration of the safety and security of system operation or the seriousness of the fraudulent activity.

### **Exceptions to the Rules:**

Call-A-Ride Saipan recognizes some disabilities and conditions may cause people to act in ways that may break some rules. For example, a person may have involuntary verbal outbursts. Disability related conditions will be taken into consideration before suspending service, but suspension will still be an option if it is necessary for safe operation of the system. Service can be restored when the rider and rider's caregivers develop a plan to ensure the safety of Call-A-Ride Saipan is not compromised.

## **FEEDBACK**

### **Complaints**

Call-A-Ride Saipan uses communication to and from our riders to keep track of how the services system is operating. Please call to let us know when you have a problem so that we can work to correct it for the future. If you have a problem on a trip, just give us your name, the date, and the approximate time of your trip.

### **Please refrain from sharing complaints with the drivers.**

We can identify with the transit information specialist who made your reservation or the driver who provided the ride. You can make a complaint in any of the following ways:

Tell a transit information specialist that you want to make a complaint.

Call Call-A-Ride Saipan and speak with the Operations and Maintenance Coordinator at COTA

Write to Call-A-Ride Saipan's Administration Office.

Submit your comment through our website: [www.cota.gov.mp](http://www.cota.gov.mp)

All comments are acted on. You will receive a confirmation letting you know your complaint was received. You may call us after fourteen calendar days (14) if you have to know the outcome of the complaint investigation.

## **Praise**

It is important to let staff know when things go well. Use any of the above methods to communicate your positive experiences. Your praise will be forwarded to drivers or other staff if you desire.

## **Comment Cards**

All vehicles carry comment cards. Ask the driver for one. You can fill one out and give it to the driver or mail it in after your trip.

## **Survey**

Call-A-Ride Saipan through COTA does a customer satisfaction survey of Call-A-Ride Saipan riders throughout the year. Please feel free to participate in the survey as they come around at community events, our office, and other public awareness events in the CNMI.

## **Lost and Found**

Riders and their attendants and companions are responsible for keeping track of their personal possessions while traveling on Call-A-Ride Saipan. If you discover you have left something on a vehicle, call the One-Call/One-Click Resource Center at (670) 664-2690 as soon as possible to report it. If the item is found, you will be contacted and told where the item is being stored. You will have up to thirty calendar days (30) to retrieve it, before it is donated to charity. If you take a Call-A-Ride Saipan ride to pick up your possession, you will be charged the normal fare. It is not the responsibility of any COTA staff to deliver the "lost and found" item(s). This is the responsibility of the riders and their attendants and companions.