

Comox Valley Regional Transit

# handyDART User Guide



## Welcome to **Comox Valley Regional handyDART**

handyDART is accessible, door-to-door, customized shared transit service for people with permanent or temporary disabilities that prevent them from using fixed-route transit without assistance from another person. handyDART picks you up at your accessible door and drops you off at the accessible door of your destination.

Comox Valley Regional Transit offers two types of accessible transit service:

- Fixed route
- handyDART

**Fixed-route service** includes low floor buses with ramps on fixed routes and schedules.

Many handyDART customers use a combination of fixed-route and handyDART services depending on their travel needs and destination. Attendants travel free on fixed-route service when you show your handyPASS. Courtesy seating on fixed-route buses is a first come first served area and accommodates scooters, wheelchairs and other mobility aids. If you need more information about using fixed-route service, including the use of a mobility aid, contact your local transit office.

This **handyDART** information will help customers, caregivers and family members become familiar with accessible transit services, and offer travelling tips, safety information and answers to frequently asked questions.



## handyDART Booking Information

When you book a trip, please have this information ready:

- Your name
- The day, date and time you need to travel (please check with the handyDART office for how much advance notice is required)
- Identify if you have an attendant or companion or an assistance animal
- Your pick-up address – street name and number
- Your drop-off address – street name and number and phone number if available
- Your appointment time
- Any special instructions (e.g. side door)
- Type of mobility aid you will be using (wheelchair, walker, etc.)

### When Your Ride Comes

When you book a trip, you will be given a 20-30 minute pick-up window.

You should be ready at the first accessible door of your pick-up location at the beginning of your pick-up window.

Example: For a 9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. pick-up window, you should be ready at 9:00 a.m.

handyDART may send a taxi rather than a handyDART vehicle. If this happens, you pay a regular handyDART fare. You are not required to pay the fare on the meter nor tip the driver.

### Customer Responsibilities

You are expected to do the following:

- Ask for the assistance you require from the driver, e.g. to take your arm or push your wheelchair
- Be at the pick-up location at the start of your pick-up window
- Carry your own parcels – a maximum of two parcels carried on your lap
- Cancel trips a **minimum** of two hours ahead of pick-up time



## **Cancelling a Trip**

handyDART resources are limited and always in demand. If you must cancel a trip, it is important that you call the handyDART office as soon as you can. By cancelling as far in advance as possible, you help us improve service to all our customers.

## **Types of Trips**

### **Subscription Trips**

Subscription trips are scheduled once a week or more at the same location and time for an extended period. An example would be a biweekly physical therapy appointment. To request this service, you must contact handyDART to check availability. Subscription trips are cancelled on holidays.

### **Reservation Trips**

Reservation trips are one time or occasional trips. These trips are scheduled on a first-to-call basis. You need to book a trip in advance of the date required but no more than 14 days in advance.

# handyDART Safety

## Driver Assistance

### Our driver will:

- assist you on and off the vehicle by the stairs or on the ramp
- secure CSA-approved car seats, wheelchairs, walkers and scooters in the vehicle
- assist you with your seat belt
- assist you to and from accessible entrance doors

### Our driver will not:

- search a building or other areas for you
- maneuver wheelchairs on stairs or unsafe ramps or surfaces
- carry parcels for you
- search you or your bag for your fare

## Wheelchair, Scooter and Mobility Aid Guidelines

The safety of our customers and our drivers is a priority for BC Transit. handyDART vehicles have a side ramp to accommodate most wheelchairs or scooters. Your mobility device must meet size, weight and safety guidelines. Combined weight means the weight of the customer and the mobility device.

**Combined Weight, power mobility devices:**  
272 kg (600 lbs.)

**Combined Weight, manual wheelchair:**  
113 kg (250 lbs.)

### Safety Guideline:

- Manual device, with an attendant, can exceed weight limit of 113 kg (250 lbs) if an attendant is assisting with boarding and getting off the bus.
- Wheelchairs are required to have lap belts and footrests.

Refer to the Mobility Aid Guide online or contact handyDART.

## **Using the Ramp**

All customers using wheelchairs or scooters will use the ramp to get on and off the handyDART vehicle.

## **Guide Dog and Service Dogs**

Guide and service dogs that are certified by the government of British Columbia are allowed on public transit at all times. This does not include emotional support or therapy dogs. If you're using a guide or service dog while travelling on one of BC Transit's services, the animal must wear its harness or leash. You may be asked to produce your BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Certificate.

According to the Province of British Columbia, it is reasonable for you to expect a guide or service dog to be:

- Clean
- Well-groomed
- Free of offensive odours
- Healthy

It is also reasonable to expect the guide or service dog to be well behaved. In other words, it must not:

- Be aggressive or put others at risk
- Damage property
- Seek attention or food
- Run freely or urinate or defecate in inappropriate areas
- Disrupt business
- Bark or growl without reason

## **Transporting Children**

An adult must accompany children under the age of six. Children less than 18 kg (40 lbs) must be carried and secured in a CSA-approved car seat, supplied by the accompanying adult.

## handyPASS

handyPASS is a photo identification card for permanent handyDART customers. It is used when purchasing Taxi Saver vouchers, taking a taxi ride, and can be used if travelling with an Attendant on fixed-route to allow your Attendant to ride free.

## Taxi Saver

When handyDART cannot accommodate your travel needs, you can use Taxi Saver vouchers for one-time trips. A limited quantity of Taxi Saver vouchers are available to permanently registered handyDART riders only. They provide a 50% subsidy towards the cost of taxi rides. You will need to have a permanent handyPASS to use the vouchers.

### **Booking a Taxi Saver Trip**

To book a Taxi Saver trip, call your local area taxi company directly. Be sure to confirm that the taxi company accepts Taxi Saver vouchers. When you call to book your taxi, tell the dispatcher if you need a wheelchair-accessible vehicle.

### **How to Use the Vouchers**

1. When you reach your destination, present your handyPASS to the driver.
2. Use your Taxi Saver vouchers to pay the dollar amount of the taxi meter fare.
3. Use cash to pay anything that is not a whole dollar amount (for example, if the taxi fare is \$5.80, you would pay \$5.00 using vouchers and 80¢ in change).

### **Rules**

1. Taxi drivers cannot make change for Taxi Saver vouchers.
2. You may not use vouchers as tips.
3. Taxi Saver vouchers are not transferable to other individuals or transit systems.

## **Taxi Service Commendations or Complaints**

If you have a compliment or complaint about the service you received when using Taxi Saver vouchers, please contact the manager of the taxi company that served you. Please have the name of the taxi company, the day and time of the trip, and the trip destination.

## **Policies and Guidelines**

### **‘No Show’ or a ‘Late Cancellation’**

If handyDART arrives during the pick-up window and you are not there, the driver will not wait. Your file will indicate a ‘No Show’ and other trips booked that day will be cancelled automatically. If you need these trips, contact the handyDART office immediately.

A ‘Late Cancellation’ occurs when you cancel a trip within two hours of your scheduled pick-up. It is very difficult to offer trips to other customers with short notice.

### **Service Restriction Penalty**

For handyDART riders who have three (3) unexplained no-shows or late cancellations within 30 days, there will be a two (2) week service suspension imposed.

Subscription riders who have three (3) unexplained no-shows or late cancellations within 30 days will also lose their subscription trip status. They will only be permitted to book one-off trips after their suspension period has ended.

Note: handyDART riders will be notified after 24 hours via telephone and/or mail each time a no-show or late cancellation occurs.



## **Appeal Process**

Incidents will not be counted as a no-show or late cancellation where the customer has called with a valid reason (something beyond the customer's control), within 24 hours.

## **Behaviour Guidelines**

In order to ensure excellent service for all customers, handyDART reserves the right to require a customer travels with an attendant or to suspend service for any customer who consistently does not meet handyDART guidelines or for inappropriate behaviour.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **May I use the fixed-route bus and handyDART for different trips?**

We encourage you to use the transit service that best meets your travel needs. Sometimes you may be able to use the fixed-route bus for a trip, while for other trips you may need the extra assistance of handyDART.

If you are not familiar with using the bus, call your local transit service for more information.

### **May I bring an attendant?**

If additional assistance is required, handyDART customers may travel with an attendant.

Please let your transit operator know if the person travelling with you is your attendant.

Attendants travel free on handyDART and accessible fixed-route, and must board and exit at the same stop as the customer.

An attendant can not be a registered handyDART customer.

Your driver will ensure that the securements are properly fastened. Attendants do not need to help load and secure mobility aids on the handyDART bus. On fixed-route, attendants are expected to assist with loading and securing mobility aids.

### **May I travel with a companion(s)?**

You may travel with family members and friends on handyDART, space permitting. A companion is a person who travels with you as a friend and is not required for your assistance. All companions pay full fare. You must let the dispatcher know that you wish to travel with a companion when you book your trip.

### **How are an attendant and a companion different?**

An attendant is a person who travels with you because you need their assistance to travel. An attendant is responsible for your care and assistance during the entire trip. Customers requiring an attendant must notify handyDART at the time the trip reservation is made. Attendants are not required to pay a fare. An attendant cannot be a registered handyDART customer.

### **May I bring a pet on board?**

Only small fur-bearing and feathered pets contained in secure, clean, hand-held cages are permitted on the bus. Cages (hard and soft shell) must be small enough to fit on your lap. If your pet poses a health or safety risk, if it misbehaves, or if the bus is full, the driver reserves the right not to allow the pet on board.

### **Can I bring parcels and bags on handyDART?**

You may bring two parcels with you but these must be held on your lap. If you are going to the airport you can bring luggage. Just tell the customer service agent when you book the trip to ensure that space is available.

## **Can I book trips for a group of customers?**

Group trips can be arranged and provided for handyDART customers, their attendants and companions if space is available. To arrange for a group trip, call your local handyDART office to speak to a customer service agent. Trips can only be provided if space is available.

## **How do I make a commendation or complaint about handyDART service?**

We appreciate your feedback on our service. For complaints or commendations, call your local municipality or regional district – visit [www.bctransit.com](http://www.bctransit.com) for contact information or ask the office.





# Service Information

## Booking a Trip 250-339-5442

### Service Hours

Monday to Friday	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Saturday	8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Sunday	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Holidays	No service

### Office Hours

Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Closed on Saturday, Sunday and all holidays.

You can call to book your trips anytime during office hours.

Please book 48 hours in advance for weekend service.

## Fares

Visit [www.bctransit.com](http://www.bctransit.com) or phone the handyDART office for information on fares.

When you communicate with BC Transit, the information being collected and/or recorded is for the purpose of providing custom transit service, as specified in the British Columbia Transit Regulation of the *British Columbia Transit Act*. BC Transit collects this information pursuant to Section 26 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The information collected will be used in compliance with this Act. If you have questions about the collection and protection of your personal information, please contact BC Transit's Privacy Officer by emailing [FOI\\_Request@BCTransit.com](mailto:FOI_Request@BCTransit.com) or phone 250-995-5679 (in Victoria) or 1-844-482-6161 or visit BC Transit at 520 Gorge Road East, Victoria, BC.