

County of Hawai'i
Mass Transit Agency (MTA)
Paratransit Service



General Information

Regulatory Definition:

Eligibility for Hele-On Kako'o (HOK) paratransit service is directly related to the inability of a person with a disability to use our existing fixed route service. The regulations describe three specific circumstances under which a person may be considered ADA paratransit eligible:

1. An individual who, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), without the assistance of another person (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), is unable to *board, ride or disembark* from an accessible bus, or is unable to independently *navigate* the system (e.g., inability to recognize & board the correct bus, inability to have the correct fare available or is unable to use the fare collection system, cannot recognize destination(s) or lacks cognizant ability to successfully reach destination if transfers need to be made).
2. Any individual who could use the fixed route service, but cannot because the fixed route he/she wants to ride is not wheelchair lift equipped or the bus stop is not accessible due to physical characteristics of the stop. **Please note that all of our fixed-route buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts.**
3. A person whose disability interacts with the environment in such a way as it **prevents** travel to or from a bus stop (e.g. individuals with cardiac conditions can walk several blocks to bus stops, but doing so in very hot weather may put them at unreasonable risk). This category also includes architectural barriers and environmental conditions that prevent travel to or from a bus stop (e.g. complex intersections or busy streets certain individuals with disabilities may not be able to cross, or lack of curb ramps or alternative accessible pathways that would make individuals who use mobility devices travel in the street, while others are able to use the sidewalk). Distance to or from the bus stop alone does not qualify someone as being eligible. Lack of fixed route service or inconvenient bus schedules is also not a basis for eligibility.

HOK service operates during the same hours as the regular fixed route service and service is available within corridors whose boundaries extend up to one (1) mile beyond the intra-Hilo and intra-Kona Hele-On fixed bus routes. A map of the coverage area can be found via our website at www.heleonbus.org/paratransit, the County of Hawai'i MTA office, and the Mo'oheau Bus Terminal in Hilo.

HOK service and scheduling guidelines include scheduling trips 1 to 14 days prior to the requested travel date, and picking up customers within a quoted 30 minute pick-up window spanning 15 minutes prior to or after the agreed pick up time. For example, if the agreed upon pick up time is 12:00 pm, the passenger could be picked up anytime from 11:45 a.m. to 12:15 pm.

There are four types of Eligibility:

- *Unconditional eligibility* – an individual who can **never** use the fixed route service independently.
- *Conditional eligibility* – an individual who can use the fixed route service under certain circumstances, but is otherwise limited by some varying environmental, physical or health conditions that may be present for some trips.
- *Temporary eligibility* (conditional or unconditional) – an individual whose disability prevents the use of the fixed route service during a designated time period.
- *Visitor* – a person who provides proof of paratransit eligibility in another jurisdiction is automatically eligible and *HOK* will provide up to 21 days of paratransit service per 365-day period. If the visitor needs service for more than 21 days, the regular application process will apply.

Eligibility

An individual's eligibility is determined by three factors. Due to the individual's disability, the individual is:

- unable to get to/from the bus stop
- unable to board/exit the bus
- cognitively unable to navigate the regular bus system

ADA Eligibility Objective

Eligibility is not based on the disability, but rather the functional inability of someone to use the fixed route service. It is to determine when and under what circumstances an individual can and cannot use the fixed route service. An individual's eligibility for paratransit service is not based on a medical decision; eligibility is based on functional ability.

Hele-On Kako'o Service

The applicant's disability and how it affects their functional ability to use regular bus service is the only criterion used in determining eligibility. Operational issues are not considered in the eligibility process. These are issues that affect any individual, whether they suffer from a disability or not.

Operational issues that are not used to determine eligibility, include:

- Age of rider
- Distance (bus stop is "too far" or inconvenient)
- Overcrowded buses
- Weather conditions that do not affect a rider's *functional* ability
- Lack of regular bus service to an area

What Types of Trips can be taken on *Hele-On Kako'o*?

Hele-On Kako'o can be used for the majority of your transportation needs. This includes:

- Work
- School
- Medical appointments
- Recreation
- Shopping

Hele-On Kako'o Fares

The standard fare is \$4 per passenger for each one-way trip within the intra-Hilo and intra-Kona fixed route service areas and their respective surrounding one-mile corridors. The \$4.00 fare amount is for a ONE-WAY ride. Individuals booking a round trip will be charged \$4.00 each way. If multiple stops are scheduled throughout the day, a \$4.00 fare for each pickup and destination point will be charged. One-way paratransit ride coupons are available for purchase at the Hawai'i County Mass Transit office. Coupons may be used by eligible riders when presented with a valid paratransit ID card.

Other travelers

If traveling with Personal Care Attendant (PCA), the PCA is subject to the terms of PCA ridership and shall embark and disembark at the same stops with the paratransit rider. The PCA shall not be charged a fare while acting in the capacity as an attendant to the eligible rider. At least one companion (non-PCA) may ride with any eligible paratransit rider as long as space is available. A companion who is not registered as the PCA shall be charged the standard fare.

Certification Process

The in-person assessment process will normally take about an hour. The certification process consists of a completed application, a brief phone interview, and an eligibility assessment. If you are required to complete an in-person functional assessment and use a mobility device, please bring the device to your appointment. You may be asked to perform physical and cognitive tasks normally associated with independently riding our fixed route bus.

Preparing for your in-person assessment

Please bring the following with you to your scheduled appointment:

- A valid, government-issued photo ID (e.g., driver's license, passport, state ID);
- A completed Hele On Kako'o paratransit application;
- A signed Suspension of Services Acknowledgement Form;
- Any mobility or assistive devices you require while traveling.

In addition, you may also want to bring any of the following documentation about your disability:

- statement from a disability service provider about your need for paratransit service,
- statement from a medical professional about your need for paratransit service,
- journal showing the impact of travel on your disability, health, energy stamina, etc.,
- listing of access barriers that prevent you from traveling to/from the bus stop (e.g. no curb cuts, no sidewalks, an extremely busy intersection, no pedestrian signals, or hilly terrain)

Your photo will also be taken at this time. **HOK** transportation service is available free of charge to and from the functional assessment upon request.

After the assessment is complete

Applicants will be notified in writing of their eligibility determination once the application is received and the assessment is complete. Applicants have the right to use HOK service if their eligibility decisions take longer than 21 days. If you are deemed eligible for the **HOK** service, you will receive a **HOK** paratransit photo ID with an identification number and a Rider's Guide explaining the **HOK** service and reservation process in more detail.

In addition to the functional assessment, the MTA may require a location assessment or physical survey of the pickup or drop-off area(s) prior to scheduling **HOK** service to determine if there are any vehicle accessibility and safety concerns. In the event our **HOK** vehicles are unable to enter an area to safely pick up a passenger, an alternate pickup location will be suggested.

Initial eligibility and recertification

HOK eligibility is certified up to a period of three (3) years, but more frequent assessments or eligibility reviews may be required depending on eligibility type and if the rider's eligibility conditions change. This process helps ensure ridership eligibility, program efficiency and information accuracy. Customers wishing to continue **HOK** service must reapply and complete the eligibility process prior to their eligibility expiration date in order to prevent a lapse in **HOK** service.

For additional information or assistance, please contact the **Hele-On Kako'o** Eligibility Division at 961-8744 or visit the Hele On website at www.heleonbus.org/paratransit.

Once you've completed your application for Hele-On Kako'o Paratransit Service, please call the County of Hawaii Mass Transit Agency (MTA) at 961-8744 to conduct your in-person interview and coordinate your functional in-person assessment.

Right to Appeal

Persons who are determined to be ineligible for **Hele-On Kako'o** paratransit service have the right to appeal the decision. A written request to appeal must be filed along with a copy of the determination letter, within 60 days of receipt of the ineligible determination letter, to the County of Hawai'i Transportation Commission at 25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, HI 96720.

Language Access

If information is needed in another language, interpretation services are available and can be requested by contacting our office.

HELE-ON KAKO'O PARATRANSIT APPLICATION

After completing this application, please call the County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency to schedule your in-person functional ability assessment at (808) 961-8744.

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION – please print clearly

Last Name: _____ First: _____ M.I. _____
____Female ____Male Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): _____/_____/_____

HOME/PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

Street: _____ City: _____ ZIP: _____
Primary Phone: (____) _____-_____ Alternate Phone: (____) _____-_____

MAILING ADDRESS (if different from above):

Street: _____ City: _____ ZIP: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION (required):

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Primary Phone: (____) _____-_____ Alternate Phone: (____) _____-_____

2. MOBILITY INFORMATION – please print clearly

Please state your disability:

Which of the following mobility aids or equipment do you use? (check all that apply)

- *Power wheelchair Length (inches): _____ Width (inches): _____
- *Manual wheelchair Length (inches): _____ Width (inches): _____
- Scooter Length (inches): _____ Width (inches): _____
- Walker
- Crutches
- Portable oxygen tank
- Cane
- Service animal
- Other (please explain): _____
- None

*The maximum weight capacity of the vehicle ramp is a combined total weight of **600 pounds**. If you exceed this limit, you must be able to board the vehicle separately from your mobility device.

*Vehicle ramp width and length may vary from vehicle to vehicle; however, the minimum dimensions of any vehicle ramp is **30"** (wide) and **48"** (length).

Will a personal care attendant* (PCA) be assisting you during travel? ____ Yes ____ No

*If you require the use of a PCA, they must be registered with the County of Hawai'i MTA to accompany you on Hele On Kako'o at no charge, subject to the rules and regulations regarding PCA. If you checked yes, please complete the following to register your PCA:

Name of PCA: _____ Phone: _____

PCA's address: _____

(continued on next page)

Is your disability permanent? ___ yes ___ no

If you indicated no, what is the expected duration? _____

Please select the category that best describes your situation:

C1

___ I **am unable** to use ADA accessible buses on the fixed route service as I have a physical, mental or visual disability or impairment preventing me from using the Hele On bus independently. I have trouble (please check all that apply):

- ___ boarding/disembarking the bus
- ___ identifying the correct bus
- ___ riding due to grasping disability (e.g. unable to grasp/handle coins to pay fare, hold on to handles/railings)
- ___ riding due to balance issues (e.g. unable to keep balance while seated on a moving vehicle)
- ___ understanding or processing information necessary to make decisions during the trip
- ___ other (please explain): _____

C2

___ I **am able** to use ADA accessible buses on the fixed route service, but my bus stop is not accessible due to the physical characteristics of the stop.

Please indicate location of stop and what barriers prevent your accessibility: _____

C3

___ I **am able** to use ADA accessible buses on the fixed route service, but I have an impairment-related condition preventing me from getting to and/or from the nearest bus stop and (please check the circumstance that applies):

- ___ I am unable to travel to the nearest bus stop.
If this is checked, how far are you able to travel on your own or with the assistance of your mobility device? _____ (1 block = 500 feet)
- ___ I am unable to wait at the bus stop for the following reason(s): _____

___ I am prevented from traveling to and/or from boarding location due to the following reason(s):

- ___ inability to negotiate hilly terrain
- ___ extreme sensitivity of climatic conditions
- ___ allergic/environmental sensitivities
- ___ night-blindness
- ___ inability to cross busy intersections
- ___ other (please explain): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Person if Other Than Applicant Completing Form: _____

Relationship: _____ Contact Phone: _____

IMPORTANT! DO NOT MAIL! CALL 961-8744 FOR YOUR INTERVIEW AND IN-PERSON ASSESSMENT SCHEDULING

You must bring in valid photo identification and this completed ADA paratransit service application to your in-person assessment appointment.



Rider Code of Conduct Policy

- Treat your fellow passengers kindly – do not abuse, threaten, use obscene language or attempt to engage them in conversation that makes them uncomfortable;
- Respect others;
- Do not interfere with the operator's ability to control the vehicle while it is in motion;
- Remain seated with your seatbelt buckled until the vehicle comes to a complete stop;
- Do not behave in ways that disrupt the service or delay the vehicle;
- Pay your fare;
- Do not participate in illegal activities while on board the vehicle, such as smoking, consuming alcohol, or carrying/using illegal substances;
- Do not abuse or damage property or equipment, including marking, scratching or vandalizing fixtures;
- Clean up after yourself – do not litter;
- Do not eat or drink on board the bus***
- Listen to music or media devices only with headphones or earphones. Keep cell phone conversations to a minimum;
- Store all items underneath the seat, or on your lap;
- Do not soil the vehicle with bodily fluids or waste, or fail to maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene;
- Do not commit violent or illegal actions on board the vehicle or use paratransit as a mode of transportation while in the process of committing a crime or conducting illegal activities;
- Do not fraudulently obtain paratransit service for yourself or for others;
- Do not carry a weapon, firearm, explosive, flammable material, or corrosive liquid on board (small oxygen tanks required for medical purposes are acceptable);
- Do not harass other riders or paratransit staff, including racial, sexual, gender, or age-related remarks;
- Do not participate in distracting, disruptive or dangerous behavior or verbal abuse as defined below:

****Exception: those who have a medical condition which requires the intake of food or drink (e.g. diabetics) may eat or drink on board the vehicle if doing so is required to help prevent the onset of a serious medical condition.*

Disruptive Behavior

Loud conversation, including cell phone conversation, screaming, yelling, and banging on any surface of the paratransit vehicle is prohibited. Engaging in unnecessary conversation with the driver while the vehicle is in motion is also prohibited as the distraction could compromise everyone's safety.

Dangerous Behavior

Any threat or action, physical and/or verbal, that could result in direct or indirect harm to the driver, vehicle or other passengers is strictly prohibited. This includes verbal abuse, in which any oral presentation is offensive to another passenger, driver or staff member.

Violation of any of these rules can result in refusal of service, suspension of service, removal from the system, fines, and/or arrest. Based on the seriousness and frequency of the offense, penalties generally follow the progressive *Time periods of service suspensions* (found on Page 4 of this document). However, immediate refusal of service and/or suspension of service may be imposed if that is necessary to preserve the safe

operation of Hele-On Kako‘o. Unless immediate suspension is warranted, a rider will receive written or verbal warning before suspended so that they can correct the behavior that is causing the problem.

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

No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy

The County of Hawai‘i Mass Transit Agency understands that because Hele-On Kako‘o requires trips to be scheduled in advance, riders may sometimes miss scheduled rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. The County of Hawai‘i Mass Transit Agency also understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely way for reasons beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled trips or failing to cancel trips in a timely way can lead to suspension of services. The following information explains the Hele-On Kako‘o paratransit services no-show and late cancellation policy.

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 five (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. Riders must be ready to board the vehicle that arrives within the pickup window. The driver will wait for a maximum of five (5) minutes within the pickup window for the rider to appear.

Late cancellation

A late cancellation is defined as a cancellation made:

- less than two (2) hours before the scheduled pickup time, or
- upon the vehicle arriving at the pickup location, or
- by refusing to board a vehicle that has arrived within the pickup window.

No show due to operator error or circumstances beyond the rider’s control

Hele-On Kako‘o does *not* count no-shows or late cancellations due to operator 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 after the end of the pickup window (late arrival)
- Drivers arriving within the pickup window, but departing prior to waiting the required five (5) minutes

Hele-On Kako‘o does *not* count no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond the rider’s control, such as:

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

Riders should call the Hele-On Kako‘o paratransit service call center at (808) 640-1020 when experiencing a no-show or late cancellation due to circumstances beyond their control as timely as possible. You will *not* be penalized for no-shows or late cancels that occur because of sudden emergencies; however, because only a 2-hour window is needed to cancel, it is anticipated that you will usually be able to cancel in a timely fashion.

Subsequent trips after a no-show will not be automatically cancelled. 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 should cancel any subsequent trips they no longer intend to take that day.

Record Keeping

Hele-On Kako’o reviews all recorded no-shows and late cancellations to ensure accuracy before posting them to a rider’s account. Drivers’ daily logs are surrendered weekly to the Mass Transit Agency administrative office. Due to the delay real-time data for all trips may not be available.

Each verified no-show or late cancellation that is consistent with the above definitions counts as one (1) occurrence. Riders are subject to suspension if all of the following conditions are met:

- Accumulation of at least three (3) no-show and/or late cancellation occurrences within a 90-day period, and
- Reserved a minimum of ten (10) trips within that same 90-day period, and
- The total of the no-show and/or late cancellation occurrences account for fifteen percent (15%) or more of the rider’s total trip reservations within that same 90-day period.

Example:

	Number of trip reservations within the past 90 days	Number of recorded no-shows and/or late cancellations	Percentage of total trips reserved as no-shows and/or late cancellations	Action to be taken
Rider A	48	6	12.5%	No suspension
Rider B	10	3	30.0%	Possible suspension
Rider C	38	6	15.8%	Possible suspension
Rider D	9	4	44.4%	No suspension

Explanation:

Rider A did not meet the minimum 15% no-show/late cancellation criterion for possible suspension.

Rider B met all three conditions.

Rider C met all three conditions.

Rider D did not meet the minimum number of trip reservations within the 90-day period.

Notification of no-shows or late cancellations

Riders who are at risk of meeting the conditions for a suspension will be sent written notification as timely as possible to warn of the potential suspension of service.

Riders who have met all the conditions for a suspension of service will be sent written notification as timely as possible, including details on late cancellations and/or no-shows that have been posted to the rider’s account.

Time periods of service suspensions

The following schedule shall apply:

	Period of Suspension
First suspension	30 calendar days
Second suspension	60 calendar days
Third suspension	90 calendar days
Fourth suspension	Indefinite pending demonstration that the problem can and will be corrected. Minimum 90 calendar days.

Instructions for appealing proposed suspensions

If you are served a suspension, you have the right to appeal and will be sent information about how to appeal with your suspension notification letter. A copy of our appeals process and form can be obtained via our website at www.heleonbus.org/paratransit or by calling our paratransit specialist at (808) 961-8744 and requesting a hard copy.

A rider who formally submits a written appeal for a suspension due to multiple no-show and/or late cancellation occurrences will be allowed to continue use of the Hele-On Kako‘o paratransit service pending the outcome of the appeal.

If you have any other questions regarding our Rider Conduct, No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy, please contact the paratransit specialist at (808) 961-8744.

We look forward to servicing you!



Suspension of Services Acknowledgement Form

If I am found eligible for participation on the Hele-On Kako'o Paratransit service, I agree to abide by the *Rider Code of Conduct Policy* and the *No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy*. By signing below I acknowledge that I received, read, understand and agree to the terms specified in the *Rider Code of Conduct Policy* and the *No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy* that could result in refusal of service, suspension of services, and/or removal from service with the County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency's Hele-On Kako'o Paratransit Service.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Rider/Applicant's Name: _____

If someone other than the applicant/rider is completing this form, please complete the following:

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Relationship to Applicant/Rider: _____

Please sign and return this page along with your completed application.