



# SANTA YNEZ VALLEY TRANSIT

## ADA Paratransit Plan

JANUARY 2024



### 1.1 Agency Information

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Plan for Santa Ynez Valley Transit has been developed in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Volume 1, from the U.S. Government Printing Office via GPO Access, cite 49 CFR 37.

#### Submitting Entity

City of Solvang  
1644 Oak Street  
Solvang, CA 93463

Contact person: Rodger Olds, Public Works Director  
Telephone: (805) 688-5575

### 1.2 Administration and Oversight

In September 1992, the City of Solvang assumed administrative and management responsibility for Santa Ynez Valley Transit (SYVT) under terms of a Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Santa Barbara and the Cities of Buellton and Solvang. Prior to this time, administrative and management activities for Santa Ynez Valley Transit were performed by the County of Santa Barbara. The daily operation of SYVT is performed under contract by a private company, RATP Dev.

Based on American Community Survey 2022 data, the service area encompasses a population of approximately 22,500.

### 1.3 Existing Fixed-Route Service

The fixed-route service (consisting of two routes) links the cities of Buellton and Solvang with the adjacent unincorporated areas of Santa Ynez and Los Olivos within Santa Barbara County along two route alignments. At the time of the Plan update, there were 34 bus stops, each of which is believed to be accessible to persons with disabilities including persons who use wheelchairs.

The SYVT fleet includes six vehicles of similar make, model, and capacity. All SYVT vehicles feature wheel-chair lifts and are ADA-compliant. Three vehicles are used to operate the fixed-route service, providing bi-directional service Monday through Saturday, from 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

### 1.4 Existing Paratransit Service

Santa Ynez Valley Transit operates a Dial-A-Ride service open to persons age 60 and above (proof of age required) as well as ADA-certified individuals regardless of age. Service is reflective of the ADA regulations, which requires complementary

paratransit service within a ¼-mile corridor of existing fixed-route service. In some neighborhoods, the Dial-A-Ride service may go beyond the mandated ¼-mile corridor.

Service hours mirror the fixed-route service (Monday through Saturday, 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). General public Dial-A-Ride is offered on Sunday (8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.). Exhibit 2 illustrates the fixed-route alignment as well as the Dial-A-Ride service area.

The SYVT fleet includes six vehicles of similar make, model, and capacity. All SYVT vehicles feature wheel-chair lifts and are ADA-compliant. Depending upon the number of rides requested on a given day, one to two vehicles are used to operate the dial-a-ride service.

In Fiscal Year 2022/23 the Dial-A-Ride service provided 2,406 unlinked trips. The demand for paratransit service is still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, although it has continued to increase gradually year-over-year.

Exhibit 1: Dial-A-Ride Ridership

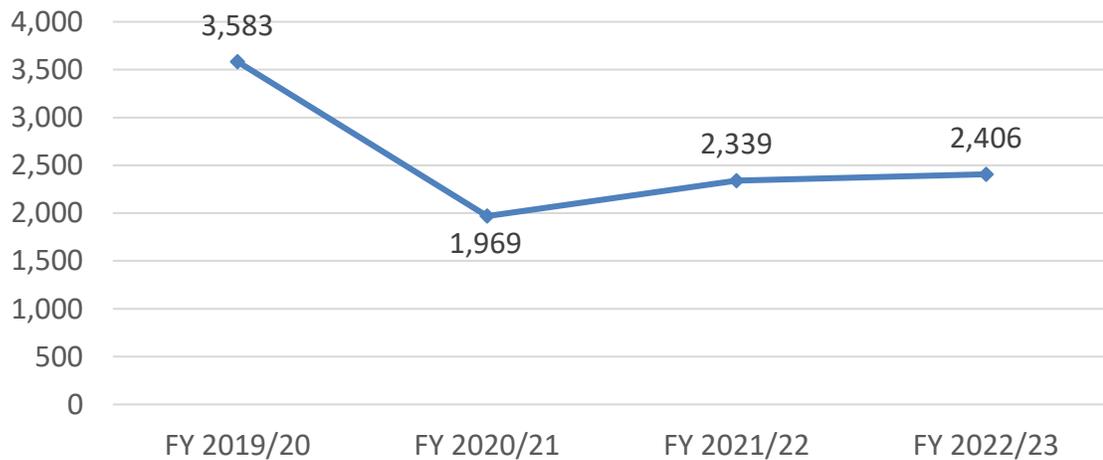
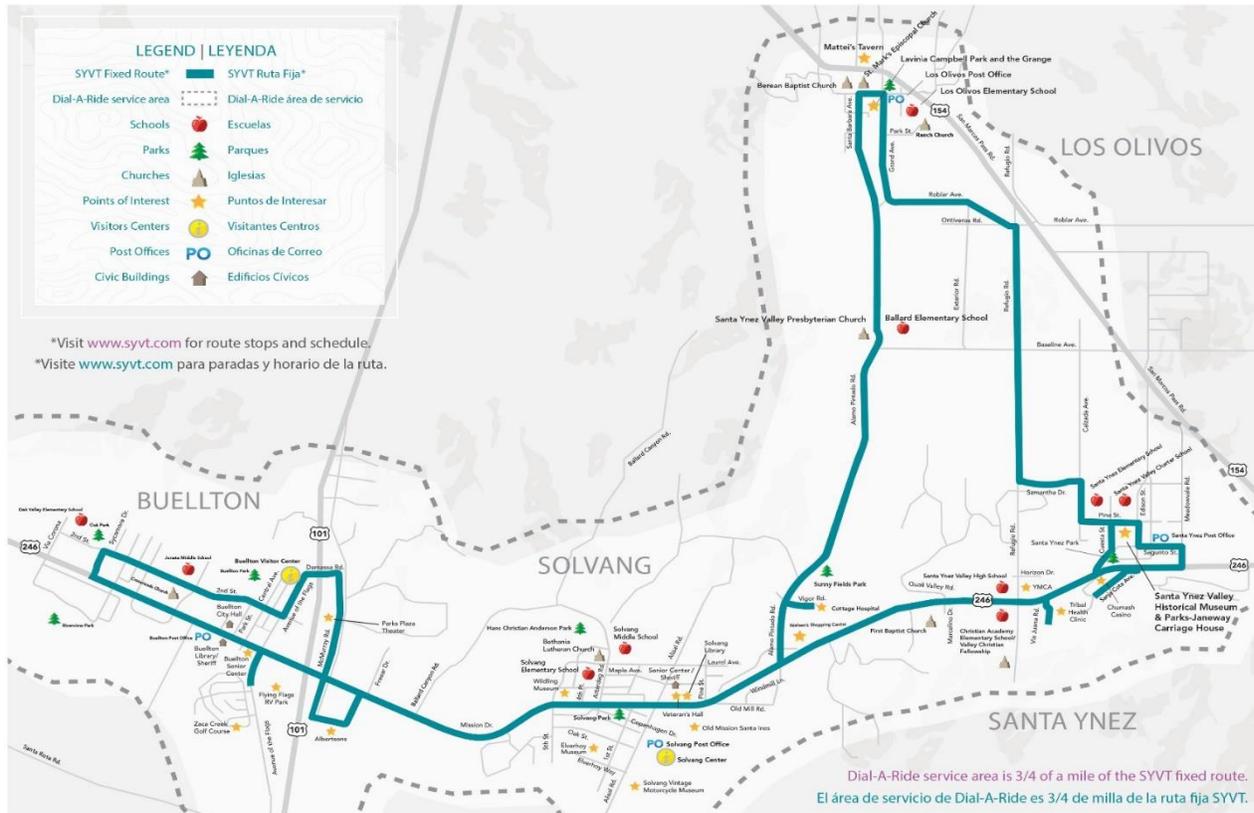


Exhibit 2: Local Fixed-Route and Dial-A-Ride Service Area Map



Capacity Constraints

Santa Ynez Valley Transit does not limit the availability of complementary paratransit service to ADA paratransit-eligible individuals by any of the following:

1. Restrictions on the number of trips an individual will be provided.
2. Waiting lists for access to the service.
3. Any operational pattern or practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA paratransit-eligible persons.
  - a. Such patterns or practices include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - i. Substantial numbers of significantly untimely pickups for initial or return trips.
    - ii. Substantial numbers of trip denials or missed trips.
    - iii. Substantial numbers of trips with excessive trip lengths.
  - b. Operational problems attributable to causes beyond the control of agency (including, but not limited to, weather or traffic conditions affecting all vehicular traffic that were not anticipated at the time a trip was scheduled) shall not be a basis for determining that such a pattern or practice exists.

No Dial-A-Ride customer shall be denied a trip reservation due solely to wheelchair capacity constraints. Santa Ynez Valley Transit staff may negotiate with customers a different trip pick-up or drop-off time to alleviate capacity constraints. The SYVT supervisor is also authorized to dispatch additional vehicles (as warranted) to accommodate ADA customers who would otherwise be denied a trip due to capacity constraints. Customers seeking service on Santa Ynez Valley Transit fixed routes who face capacity constraints (such as fully occupied wheelchair tie-down locations) should notify the dispatch office at (805) 688-5452 at the time of capacity concern. A Dial-A-Ride vehicle may be dispatched to transport the customer to their desired bus stop location and the customer will be charged the applicable fixed-route rate.

**1.5 Fares**

The current fare structure is presented in Exhibit 3. The Dial-A-Ride service remains compliant with ADA regulations, which states the fare for a complementary paratransit service cannot exceed twice that of the general fare of the corresponding fixed-route service. As of July 1, 2011, the Dial-A-Ride fare for seniors and ADA-certified customers was reduced from \$2.25 to \$1.75 per trip through a subsidy provided by the MOU partners.

In addition to fare payment onboard the vehicles, fare media may be purchased Monday through Friday (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the SYVT office located at 595 Alamo Pintado Road, Suite C (Solvang). This facility is ADA-accessible.

**Exhibit 3: Current Fare Structure – Dial-A-Ride**

Service Mode	Classification	Fare
	General Public	\$1.50
	Senior	\$1.25
	ADA-Certified	\$0.75
	Children under 5 (w/paying adult)	Free
	Multi-Trip Pass (General)	\$15.00
	Senior Multi-Trip Pass	\$12.50
	ADA-certified Multi-Trip Pass	\$7.50
	Monthly Pass (General)	\$42.50
	Monthly Pass (Senior)	\$35.00
	Monthly Pass (ADA-certified)	\$21.00
Dial-A-Ride	General Public (Sunday only)	\$2.25
	Senior/ADA-certified	\$1.75
	Senior/ADA-certified Multi-Trip Pass	\$17.50
	Attendants and Service Animals	Free*

*\*when accompanying an ADA-certified rider.*

## 1.6 Paratransit Fleet Composition

Given the size and scope of the Santa Ynez Valley Transit program as well as the rural nature of the service area, the fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride services share a common fleet. The pull-out requirement for the fixed-route service is three vehicles, while the Dial-A-Ride service fleet requirement varies based on demand (i.e., the number of booked trips). All SYVT vehicles feature space for up to two (2) wheelchairs and are gasoline-powered. The current fleet includes six Class 4 (25-foot) cutaway vehicles: two model year 2016, two model year 2018, and two model year 2020.

## 1.7 Public Participation

In August 2022, Santa Ynez Valley Transit completed a Dial-A-Ride survey designed to capture details regarding Dial-A-Ride (DAR) customer travel habits, perceptions, and mobility needs.

A survey instrument was submitted to the City of Solvang's project manager for review and approval. The survey was distributed via first class mail to 125 recent Dial-A-Ride customers. A postage-paid return envelope was included. The survey was also made available onboard the vehicles across a three-day period.

The survey revealed:

- More than 79 percent of respondents ride twice a week or less.
- The most common trip purpose is to access healthcare (39.1 percent).
- Respondents noted they use the service because they don't drive or no longer drive (37.5 percent).
- Respondents typically use the SYVT regular bus as well (40 percent).
- All respondents noted they travel alone while using Dial-A-Ride.

A community survey was also launched in August 2022 to identify community mobility needs, perceptions of Santa Ynez Valley Transit services among riders and non-riders, and barriers to use well as potential motivators for use. Such data can help guide service evaluation and identify potential areas of improvement.

A survey instrument was crafted and provided to the City of Solvang's project manager for review and approval. A link to the project webpage (which featured the online survey) was provided on the Santa Ynez Valley Transit website, on posters and flyers distributed throughout the Santa Ynez Valley, and through a media release distributed to local media outlets.

The survey revealed:

- Most common barrier to use of public transit: Prefer to drive own vehicle (45.8 vehicle).
- Access to a personal vehicle (100 percent).
- Greatest motivator to potential future use of public transit: Lose access to personal vehicle and/or lose driver license/stop driving (41.4 percent each).
- Has not used SYVT or Dial-A-Ride within the 90 days prior to survey contact (86.2 percent).
- Speaks English at home (82.1 percent).
- Believes public transit is an important service for people with no/limited transportation options (72.4 percent).

Santa Ynez Valley Transit is the sole publicly funded paratransit provider for individuals with disabilities and seniors over the age of 60 in its jurisdiction.

The participation of individuals with disabilities in the continued development and assessment of SYVT services is encouraged. Interested individuals may submit comments or concerns to the City's Public Works Director either via letter (City of Solvang, 411 Second Street, Solvang 93463), email (rols@cityofsolvang.com), or phone (805-688-5575).

## 1.8 ADA Certification Process

### Visitors

Persons certified as ADA-eligible by another transit agency who are visiting the Santa Ynez Valley may use the Dial-A-Ride service for any combination of 31 days within any 365-day period without proof of residency or completion of a Santa Ynez Valley Transit ADA certification application.

### Persons with disabilities (all ages)

Persons with disabilities desiring use of the demand-response service must submit a completed application including a physician's signature. A photocopy of a government-issued identification card is also required. The application form, which is available in English and Spanish, is shown in Exhibit 5.

Applicants are assumed to be eligible to use the dial-a-ride service during the application review period.

As outlined within the ADA, there are three categories under which a person may be eligible for complementary ADA paratransit service:

1. An individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or

mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device) to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

2. An individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or boarding assistance device is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route on the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.
3. An individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents the individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on the regular system.<sup>1</sup>

#### Application

Eligibility will be based primarily on the information presented within the application. Applicants are assumed to be eligible to use the dial-a-ride service during the application review period.

The completed application along with a photocopy of a government-issued identification card should be submitted to:

ADA Coordinator  
City of Solvang  
411 Second Street  
Solvang, CA 93463

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<sup>1</sup> 49 CFR §37.123 – ADA paratransit eligibility: Standards.

Exhibit 5: SYVT Dial-A-Ride Application forms

<b>Santa Ynez Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride Application Form</b>	
<p>Santa Ynez Valley Transit provides dial-a-ride service for qualifying seniors (age 60 and above) and individuals with disabilities (regardless of age). Qualifying individuals are also eligible for reduced fares on SYVT's fixed-route bus service. To maintain your eligibility for dial-a-ride, complete this form and return it with a copy of your government-issued ID.</p>	
<p>Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____</p>	
<p>Home Address: _____</p>	
<p>Mailing Address (if different from home address) _____</p>	
<p>Telephone Day ( ) _____ Telephone Evening ( ) _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Male    <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p>
<p>Are you over the age of 60? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    Do you have a disability which impacts your mobility? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>TTY/TTD (Hearing-Impaired) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Please provide photocopy of a government-issued ID with this application.</b></p>	
<p>Please check all that apply when traveling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Limited to wheelchair <i>If yes, is it motorized?</i>    <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other mobility device (walker, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal Care Attendant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Service animal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Oxygen tank</li> </ul>	<p>Do you wish to have transit information and materials provided to you in any of the following forms? (check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Large print</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Audio</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____</li> </ul>
<p>Provide the name and telephone number of someone SYVT may contact in the event of an emergency:</p>	
<p>Name: _____ Relationship: _____</p>	
<p>Telephone Day ( ) _____ Telephone Evening ( ) _____</p>	
<b>ONLY COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY</b>	
<b>This section to be completed by applicant's physician.</b>	
<p>Physician's name: _____ Phone ( ) _____</p>	
<p>Address: _____</p>	
<p>Indicate applicant's disability. (check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical disability</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive disability</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> None</li> </ul>	
<p>Is the applicant's disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary    <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent</p>	
<p>If temporary, what is the estimated date said disability will end: ____/____/____</p>	
<p><i>I certify the eligibility information contained in this document is true and correct.</i></p>	
<p>_____ Physician's Signature</p>	<p>_____/_____/_____ Date</p>
<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Approved: Permanent/Senior</p>	<p>By: _____</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Temporary (until) date: ____/____/____</p>	<p>Date: ____/____/____</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Denied</p>	

For Dial-A-Ride information call (805) 688-5452

<b>Aplicación Para Santa Ynez Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride</b>		
Santa Ynez Valley Transit brinda servicio de transporte para personas mayores que califican (de 60 años o más) y personas con discapacidades (independientemente de su edad). Las personas que califican también son elegibles para tarifas reducidas en el servicio de autobús de ruta fija de SYVT. Para mantener su elegibilidad para dial-a-ride, complete este formulario y devuélvalo con una copia de su identificación emitida por el gobierno.		
Apellido: _____ Nombre: _____ Fecha de Nacimiento: ___/___/___		
Dirección de hogar: _____		
Dirección de Correo (si es diferente de su hogar) _____		
Teléfono de Día ( ) _____ Teléfono de Noche ( ) _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Hombre <input type="checkbox"/> Mujer
¿Eres mayor de 60 años de edad? <input type="checkbox"/> Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No		¿Tiene alguna discapacidad que afecte su movilidad? <input type="checkbox"/> Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No
Proporcione una fotocopia de una identificación emitida por el gobierno con esta solicitud.		TTY/TID (deficientes auditivos) <input type="checkbox"/> Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No
Por favor marque todo lo que aplica cuando viaja: <input type="checkbox"/> Limitado a silla de ruedas <i>En caso afirmativo, ¿es motorizado?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Otro dispositivo de movilidad (andador, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Asistente de cuidado personal <input type="checkbox"/> Animal de servicio <input type="checkbox"/> Tanque de oxígeno		¿Desea que se le proporcione información y materiales de tránsito en cualquiera de las siguientes formas? (marque todo lo que corresponda) <input type="checkbox"/> Letra grande <input type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Otro: _____
Proporcione el nombre y número de teléfono de alguien con quien SYVT pueda contactar en caso de una emergencia: Nombre: _____ Relación: _____ Teléfono de Día ( ) _____ Teléfono de Noche ( ) _____		
<b>SOLAMENTE COMPLETA ESTA SECCION SI TIENES UN DISCAPACIDAD</b>		
<b>Esta sección debe ser completada por el médico del solicitante.</b>		
Physician's name: _____ Phone ( ) _____ Address: _____		
Indicate applicant's disability. (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical disability <input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical disability <input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive disability	
Is the applicant's disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent		
If temporary, what is the estimated date said disability will end: ___/___/___ <i>I certify the eligibility information contained in this document is true and correct.</i>		
_____ Physician's Signature		_____ Date
<b>SOLAMENTE POR USO DE LA OFICINA</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved: Permanent/Senior <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary (until) date: ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Denied		By: _____ Date: ___/___/___

Para información de Dial-A-Ride llame al (805) 688-5452

### Application Review

Once an application is received, it will be reviewed by the City of Solvang. Eligibility determination will be made within 21 calendar days.

### Approval/Denial Determination

Once a determination has been made, a written notification, or an alternate accessible format upon request, will be mailed regarding ADA certification. If the applicant is determined eligible for ADA certification, the letter will contain information on how to schedule a SYVT Dial-A-Ride trip. If it is determined the applicant is not eligible for ADA certification, the letter will explain the basis for denial.

### Appeals Process

Applicants who are denied certification and disagree with the eligibility decision have the right to an appeal. The applicant must request an appeal within 60 days of receipt of the initial eligibility decision. Individuals will have an opportunity to be heard in person and/or present additional information regarding their disability.

An Appeals Panel will review the case and make a final decision. The Appeals Panel will include persons not involved in the application approval/denial process. Once the appeal process is completed, the applicant will be notified within 30 calendar days. The final decision will be made available in writing or an alternate accessible format if so requested. If the appeal is denied, the reason(s) for denial will be included.

### Recertification

Any applicant categorized as having a permanent disability must undergo recertification every three (3) years. Doing so will allow Santa Ynez Valley Transit to update its records to ensure correct information regarding an applicant's disability and accurate emergency contact information are on file.

All applicants categorized as having a temporary disability will be given a specific date when eligibility to use Dial-A-Ride expires. Such determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. If the disability persists beyond the expiration date given, a new application must be submitted.

### Trip Reservation Procedure

Santa Ynez Valley Transit is in compliance with the ADA and its reservation process adheres to the following:

*(b) Response time. The entity shall schedule and provide paratransit service to any ADA paratransit eligible person at any requested time on a particular day in*

*response to a request for service made the previous day. Reservations may be taken by reservation agents or by mechanical means.*

- 1) The entity shall make reservation service available during at least all normal business hours of the entity's administrative offices, as well as during times, comparable to normal business hours, on a day when the entity's offices are not open before a service day.*
- 2) The entity may negotiate pickup times with the individual, but the entity shall not require an ADA paratransit eligible individual to schedule a trip to begin more than one hour before or after the individual's desired departure time.*
- 3) The entity may use real-time scheduling in providing complementary paratransit service.*
- 4) The entity may permit advance reservations to be made up to 14 days in advance of an ADA paratransit eligible individual's desired trips. When an entity proposes to change its reservation system, it shall comply with the public participation requirements equivalent to those of §37.137 (b) and (c).<sup>2</sup>*

Once an individual has been certified to ride Santa Ynez Valley Transit's Dial-A-Ride service, he/she may schedule a trip for any purpose. To schedule a trip, call (805) 688-5452. Upon reaching the dispatcher, the patron should be prepared to provide the following information:

- Rider's first and last name.
- If an attendant, child, companion, or service animal will also be riding.
- Rider's exact address, including an apartment number, building, or business name if appropriate.
- Exact pick-up address (if location differs from rider's home address).
- The exact address of rider's destination, including suite number, building, or business name.
- Rider's requested pick-up time and appointment time (if applicable).
- If the rider is traveling with a wheelchair or other mobility device (scooter, crutches, etc.).

Reservations can be made Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. After hours, customers should leave a detailed message (providing all information listed above). If the requested time is available, the trip will be scheduled the following service day. If the desired time is unavailable, the customer will receive a return phone call to the number provided on the message and the

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<sup>2</sup> 49 CFR §37.131 – Service criteria for complementary paratransit.

dispatcher will suggest alternative times. To help accommodate rider travel needs, trip reservations must be made no later than the day prior than the desired trip time. Same-day trip requests are honored on an as-received basis, space permitting, and must be requested a minimum of two hours in advance.

Dial-A-Ride is a shared-ride service. Patrons are asked to allow at least a 30-minute travel time to their destinations given the vehicle may make additional pick-ups and drop-offs enroute.

#### Changes to Existing Reservations

If a reserved trip will not be made as originally scheduled, it must be canceled and rescheduled as a new trip with the SYVT Customer Service Representative (not the driver) with the new origin and/or destination at least two hours in advance of the scheduled trip. According to SYVT's No-Show Policy, if the trip is not canceled two hours in advance, the customer will be considered a no-show if they choose not to take the scheduled trip. Depending upon the origin and destination of the new trip as well as other rider reservations, the customer may lose the originally scheduled pick-up time.

No changes to trip reservations will be allowed onboard the vehicle. The customer may take the trip as scheduled (and therefore incur no penalty) or may refuse to take the trip at the pick-up location (which will be considered a no-show). If the customer boards the vehicle, the driver will transport the customer to the scheduled location at the scheduled time. Boarding the vehicle will be viewed by the driver as confirmation by the customer that they want to take the reserved trip as originally scheduled. If the customer decides after boarding the bus or while enroute that he/she does not wish to travel to the scheduled location, the driver will return the customer to his/her home as the schedule allows. The trip will be recorded as a no-show and any scheduled return trip will be canceled.

It is not the intent of Santa Ynez Valley Transit to leave customers stranded away from home. However, last-minute schedule changes cannot be accommodated and will not be accepted onboard the vehicle due to their impact on the scheduled trips of other customers.

#### No-Show Policy

Santa Ynez Valley Transit depends on efficient scheduling to accommodate as many customers as possible. Therefore, it is important once a customer schedules a trip, the trip either be taken or cancelled within a reasonable amount of time. To ensure service efficiency and effectiveness, Santa Ynez Valley Transit has established a no-show and late cancellation policy. This policy allows SYVT to provide the most efficient service possible to each of its customers.

Failing to appear for a scheduled trip, or canceling a trip without proper notice, is considered a no-show. A no-show is defined as:

- A passenger who fails to cancel an unneeded or unwanted scheduled trip.
- A passenger who is not at the designated pick-up location at the scheduled time or service window.
- A passenger who cancels a scheduled ride less than two (2) hours in advance of the scheduled pick-up time.

Drivers will wait up to two minutes at the scheduled pick-up location upon arrival or after the beginning of the scheduled service window.

To encourage policy compliance, the following consequences for repeated no-shows may be implemented:

- Two (2) no-shows within a four-month period will result in a verbal warning.
- Three (3) no-shows within a four-month period will result in a written warning.
- Four (4) no-shows within a four-month period will result in a written notice of a 30-day service suspension.

Santa Ynez Valley Transit will notify all customers subject to service restrictions in writing. Upon request, such notification will be made available in alternate format. Additional details regarding the format of verbal and written notices are provided in Section 1.9.

Santa Ynez Valley Transit has an appeals process that allows customers to appeal any restriction in service due to repeated no-shows. A customer may submit a written appeal within seven (7) calendar days of receiving notification and should submit a letter to Santa Ynez Valley Transit specifically outlining why the monetary fine or service restriction (suspension) should not be implemented.

## 1.9 Rider Behavior

### Prohibited Behaviors

To ensure safety for both Santa Ynez Valley Transit customers and staff, SYVT prohibits seriously disruptive behavior, public health threats, and refusal to comply with adopted policies. ADA regulations expressly authorize a public transit agency to suspend a Dial-A-Ride customer's service because of no-shows. ADA regulations also expressly authorize a public transit provider to refuse or suspend service to a Dial-A-Ride customer if the customer engages in conduct that is violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal.

The following list provides examples of behavior and conduct that, generally speaking, would meet the ADA’s “violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct” standard. These examples serve as a starting point for the case-by-case determination required by the Service Refusal and Service Suspension policies and should not be viewed as a basis for automatic service suspension or refusal. In addition, this is not an exhaustive list of conduct and behaviors that might be encountered within Santa Ynez Valley Transit’s Dial-A-Ride program. These examples serve as representative illustrations of conduct and behavior that is potentially within the scope of the Service Suspension Policy and should be evaluated according to that policy’s requirements.

#### *Violent, Seriously Disruptive, or Illegal Behavior*

Service may be refused to riders who engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal behavior. Examples of such behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical actions toward operators or other passengers, such as striking, biting, kicking, spitting, unwanted physical contact, and/or throwing items.
- Threatening operators or other passengers.
- Isolated instances or a demonstrated pattern of causing damage to vehicles, such as tearing seats, breaking windows, breaking seatbelts, removing or disabling equipment, and similar conduct.
- A demonstrated pattern of no-shows.
- Isolated instances or demonstrated pattern behaviors causing service disruption, i.e., that result in the bus operator having to interrupt service for a significant time period or having to put the vehicle out of service, preventing pick-up or drop-off of other customers, or results that have a similarly disruptive effect on service. Such behaviors include but are not limited to continuous shouting, screaming, banging the windows, upsetting other passengers, causing other passengers to engage in seriously disruptive conduct, and opening emergency windows.
- Isolated instances or a demonstrated pattern of unlawful behavior, such as possession of drugs or an open container of alcohol, smoking, exposing oneself, urination onboard Santa Ynez Valley Transit vehicles, sexual harassment of Santa Ynez Valley Transit customers or employees, and any other illegal behavior.

#### *Public Health Threats*

Service may be refused to any rider who poses a potential public health threat. Examples of public health threats include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A demonstrated pattern of uncontained incontinence;
- The existence of excrement on clothes or on hands; and
- The existence of other body fluids, such as blood or vomit, on face, hands, or clothing.

#### *Refusal to Comply with Safety Rules*

A rider that refuses to comply with posted safety rules or driver instructions may be refused service. An example of such a refusal includes, but is not limited to:

- A demonstrated pattern of refusal to travel safely, such as refusal to remain seated (when seats are available and standing would pose a risk to safety), refusal to remain in an upright position, refusal to have mobility device secured, or boarding or attempting to board with an unsafe mobility device.

If the prohibited behavior results from a disability, Santa Ynez Valley Transit may require that a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) accompany the rider to control the prohibited behavior. Such a modification may also be required of senior customers who are unable to control their behavior due to dementia or other cognitive or memory issues.

#### *Not Sufficient to Support Service Suspension or Refusal*

While the following behaviors may be undesirable and/or unwanted, they alone are not sufficient to support service suspension or refusal:

- Abusive or profane outbursts that do not fall under the criteria for “seriously disruptive behavior”; and
- Language or comments that are offensive, annoying, or embarrassing to Santa Ynez Valley Transit operators or staff.

#### Service Refusal Policy

Service refusal is intended to address conduct or behavior occurring at the time of service delivery but for which a suspension would not be appropriate. For example, a Santa Ynez Valley Transit customer who on a particular occasion insists on boarding with an unsafe device or object, or who is engaging in violent conduct, may be refused service on that occasion. The operator must immediately notify dispatch of the service refusal and the reason(s) for the service refusal. This should include a detailed factual description of the conduct or behavior upon which the operator based the decision to refuse service. The driver and dispatcher shall both document the incident via an incident report.

Where appropriate, alternative transportation arrangements should be made for a SYVT Dial-A-Ride customer to ensure the customer’s safety. For example, service

refusal at a customer's place of residence would not require alternative transportation. However, a service refusal at a non-home location could require that such arrangements be made. This could be in the form of a taxi ride home or being picked up by a SYVT field supervisor. In any case, the action should be documented and the trip must be recorded as a no-show. It is important that the trip be recorded as a no-show so that it will serve as a deterrent to the undesired behavior.

If service is refused for a prohibited behavior that is later determined to be the result of a disability, Santa Ynez Valley Transit will work with the customer and/or the customer's representative to identify an accommodation or modification that will help prevent future service refusals due to the prohibited conduct or behavior.

Service refusals may not be used as a substitute for a service suspension. Behavior occurring repeatedly should be reviewed and addressed in accordance with the guidelines for service suspensions.

#### [Service Suspension Policy](#)

##### *Investigation*

Reports of inappropriate conduct (including failure to show for a scheduled ride) must be investigated to the extent practicable to determine the facts of the events giving rise to the report. If the investigation confirms that the conduct did occur, the investigator must then determine whether the conduct rises to the level of violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal.

In making this determination, the cause of the conduct should be considered; for example, if information is brought forward indicating the customer's conduct is asserted to be involuntary due to their disability. In such circumstances, the relationship of the disability condition to the conduct at issue must be considered. If the available information shows the conduct is involuntary and caused by the customer's disability, the City of Solvang (as the administrator of Santa Ynez Valley Transit) must consider whether the conduct is such that some reasonable modification would enable the individual to use the service. If reasonable modification is not possible, or if the conduct is not involuntary or caused by the customer's disability, reasonable modification would not be required. If appropriate, continued use of paratransit service may be conditioned upon the customer's compliance with measures reasonably calculated to ensure the safety of the customer, other passengers, or employees.

##### *Warnings*

Generally, a service suspension will be implemented only after the customer has been given at least one (1) verbal warning and one (1) written warning (a total of two warnings) regarding the conduct or behavior for which a service suspension is

contemplated.

A verbal warning must be documented by the driver or dispatcher via an incident report. This report should include the specifics of the behavior or conduct involved; the time, date and location of the conduct; the date and time the verbal warning was given, the name and title of the Santa Ynez Valley Transit employee who issued the verbal warning, and any other relevant facts. The incident report should note that the SYVT employee informed the customer as to the specific behavior that should cease or be corrected as well as the potential consequences of failing to change the behavior.

A verbal warning should be given when a Dial-A-Ride customer has accrued two (2) no-shows within a four-month period.

Behavior that triggers a written warning (including a no-show) must be documented by the driver or dispatcher via an incident report. A written warning should describe the behavior or conduct for which the warning is given. This description should include the specifics of the behavior or conduct involved; the time, date and location of the conduct; details regarding the prior verbal warning; and any other relevant facts. The written warning should advise the customer that the behavior or conduct must cease or be corrected, and of the consequences of failure to cease or correct the behavior or conduct. If appropriate, the warning should include a description of the conduct expected of the customer in the future or of the modification offered or required as a condition of continuing to provide Santa Ynez Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride service. SYVT staff shall consider whether the written warning itself or the corrective action suggested or the modification offered should be further discussed with the customer and/or his or her representative.

A written warning should be given when a Dial-A-Ride customer has accrued three (3) no-shows within a four-month period.

#### *Notice of Service Suspension*

If the proposed service suspension is the result of four (4) no-shows within a four-month period, the customer will be issued a Notice of Service Suspension effective for seven (7) days, as detailed in the No-Show Policy.

If the proposed service suspension is the result of five (5) no-shows within a four-month period, the customer will be issued a Notice of Service Suspension effective for thirty (30) days, as detailed in the No-Show Policy.

Notice of any proposed service suspension must be in writing. The notice must include identification of the prior warnings given regarding the conduct at issue. For each warning listed in the notice, the date of the warning, the behavior or conduct

for which the warning was issued, and the customer's attempts to cease or correct the behavior or conduct shall be summarized. If the service suspension is due to no-shows, the date, time, and pick-up location of each no-show should be included in the written notice.

For behavior-related issues, service suspension should be implemented only after customer has been given the opportunity to be heard on the issue for which Santa Ynez Valley Transit is contemplating a service suspension (a "pre-suspension meeting").

The notice must include a description of the immediate behavior or conduct which prompted the Notice of Service Suspension. This description should include the specifics of the behavior or conduct involved; the time, date and location of the conduct; and any other relevant facts.

The notice must advise the customer of his or her opportunity to be heard in-person or to submit written or alternative format information for the City of Solvang's (as the administrator of Santa Ynez Valley Transit) consideration regarding the proposed behavior-related suspension. The notice shall advise the customer that the customer or the customer's representative must contact SYVT designated representative within one week (stipulate date) to request an in-person meeting. The name of and phone number for the designated representative shall be stated in the notice. If the customer prefers instead of an in-person meeting to submit a written response to the proposed suspension, the notice shall advise the customer of the date by which the written response must be received by the City of Solvang (as the administrator of Santa Ynez Valley Transit). Extensions of this date may be allowed for good cause.

Dial-A-Ride service will continue to be provided during the notification and pre-suspension meeting process unless the behavior in question creates an immediate risk to safety.

#### *Pre-Suspension Meeting*

If the customer or his/her representative has timely requested an in-person meeting regarding the proposed suspension for a behavior-related issue, the City-designated representative shall notify the customer of the date and time for the meeting. The meeting shall occur at City of Solvang offices unless a different location is agreed upon by the City- designated representative and the customer. If necessary, paratransit service shall be provided to the customer to and from the place of the pre-suspension meeting.

The pre-suspension meeting shall be informal. The customer shall be given the

opportunity to provide the City-designated representative with the customer's account, orally and by documents and other information, of the incident(s) upon which the proposed suspension is based. The customer may also present any other information relevant to the incident(s) upon which the proposed suspension is based. The customer may present his or her account and related information through a representative.

Once the pre-suspension meeting is complete or the customer's written submission has been received and reviewed, or alternatively, the customer has neither requested a pre-suspension meeting nor provided a written submission by the specified date, the City-designated representative shall review the available information and decide whether or not to suspend service and, if service is to be suspended, determine the length of the behavior-related suspension. The customer shall be notified in writing of the decision, and the basis for the decision shall be explained. If the decision is to suspend the customer's Santa Ynez Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride service, the customer shall also be advised of his or her right to appeal the service suspension. A description of the procedure for requesting an appeal of a service suspension shall also be included.

#### *Duration of Service Suspension*

A service suspension for a behavior-related issue should be "for a reasonable period of time." "Reasonable period of time" depends on the facts of the specific incident. In determining the length of the service suspension, the following factors should be considered:

- The need to protect other customers, employees, or system safety;
- The seriousness of the risk created or harm caused by the customer's behavior or conduct;
- The number of prior warnings given and the period of time over which those warnings were given; and
- The likely corrective effect of the suspension on the customer's future behavior or conduct, in light of the customer's particular circumstances.

Generally, similar situations should be addressed by similar suspensions. Suspensions due to seriously disruptive behavior may be different than those imposed per the No-Show Policy depending upon the situation.

#### *Exceptional conduct*

Conduct that inflicts serious harm on another customer or a Santa Ynez Valley Transit operator or employee, results in serious damage to SYVT property, or creates an immediate actual risk to safety, may warrant immediate suspension of service without prior warning or a pre-suspension hearing. As soon as practicable following

imposition of a suspension for exceptional conduct, the customer should be advised in writing of the basis for the suspension, including a description of the behavior or conduct involved; the time, date and location of the conduct; and any other relevant facts. The customer should also be advised of the opportunity for a pre-suspension meeting, as described above for Notice of Service Suspension. The procedures for convening a pre-suspension meeting outlined above should then be followed.

A suspension for exceptional conduct should be based on behavior or conduct that is extreme or egregious. A suspension under this provision should be the exception, not the rule, and should be used sparingly to address only the most severe and immediately dangerous or threatening actions. If such a suspension is necessary, it should be for no less than thirty (30) days.

#### [Service Suspension Appeals Process](#)

Customers who receive a service suspension based on behavior or conduct have the right to an appeal. The customer must request an appeal in writing within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the decision regarding service suspension. The suspension will be put on hold during the appeals process unless the behavior in question creates an immediate risk to safety.

An Appeals Panel will review the case and make a final decision. The Appeals Panel will include persons not involved in the investigation and review of the initial determination or the pre-suspension meeting. Once the appeals process is completed, the applicant will be notified within ten (10) calendar days. The final decision will be made available in writing or an alternate accessible format if so requested. If the appeal is denied, the reason(s) for denial will be included, and the suspension will be reinstated.