

# Care-A-Van Service Guide

## **CARE-A-VAN SERVICE HOURS:**

Monday to Friday  
6:30am to 10:30pm

Saturday  
8:00am to 10:30pm

Sunday  
8:00am - 6:30pm



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# **Sarnia Care-A-Van: A Specialized Transit Service**

## **Background: Sarnia Care-A-Van Service**

Sarnia Caravan provides specialized transportation to eligible residents of Sarnia and Point Edward, who have a disability that prevents them from riding conventional transit all of the time or on occasion.

Sarnia Care-A-Van provides transportation services from accessible door to accessible door.

## **Eligibility Criteria/Guidelines**

Care-A-Van services are for residents of the City of Sarnia who are unable to use conventional fixed-route transit as per the Integrated Regulations of the AODA.

***Did you know... that all of Sarnia Transit's Conventional/Fixed Route buses are fully accessible.***

Sarnia Care-A-Van is a registered service. Application forms are mandatory, and require a medical professional to sign and confirm your need for Care-A-Van service. This form must be renewed every 3 years.

Eligibility is considered on a case-by-case basis and is not based on a specific health condition but how a specific medical condition impacts mobility.

## **Service Guidelines: What We Do vs. What We Don't Do**



**We Do: Provide transportation services (only)**

- assist passengers from accessible door to accessible door. This includes assisting passengers, who use a wheelchair or mobility device, from an exterior door to an exterior door.
- we provide assistance to ambulatory passengers who cannot board/alight steps by using our onboard wheelchairs to bring you onto and off the vehicle using our lift

- we assist clients and their mobility devices on and off their vehicles to and from their destinations.



### **We Do Not: Provide any additional service (other than transportation)**

- provide any level of personal support services to passengers, personal or medical
- enter buildings in search of passengers, to collect passengers or to deliver passengers to appointments
- assist passengers with their carry-on items at any time. If you cannot manage your carry-on items on your own, you will need to ensure you are travelling with a support person or a companion to assist you.

### **Passenger Responsibilities & General Booking Practices**

- 1) Trips bookings can be made up to 14 days in advance, regardless of the purpose.
- 2) Trips are **only** booked on the hour and half past the hour (example: 9:00a and 9:30a).
- 3) Passengers are required to be ready for the arrival of the Care-A-Van beginning 5 minutes prior up to 5 minutes after their scheduled booking time.

This is a 10-minute booking/arrival window, your Care-A-Van may arrive at any time during this window.

(example: Scheduled Time: 9:00a, Booking/Arrival Window: 8:55a-9:05a)

Your automated booking confirmation message (voice, SMS (text) or email) will indicate the earliest time frame you can expect the Care-A-Van to arrive.

Note: this window allows us the ability to co-ordinate shared trips on our service, which allows us to transport more passengers at one time

- 4) Upon arrival, the Care-A-Van will wait a maximum of 5 minutes for you to make your way outside and board the

bus. If the 5-minute window has elapsed with no sign of a passenger, the driver will cancel the trip at the door and continue on to their next pickup. \*\* The return trip will also be cancelled. \*\* Our driver's schedules are restrictive; they do not have additional time to wait without causing delays to other passengers. Please be considerate of the driver's schedule as well as other passengers.

- 5) Sarnia Care-A-Van service is a shared ride service, which means you can expect to share your ride with other passengers. As a result, it may take you longer than previously anticipated from the time of pickup to the time you reach your final destination. The maximum duration for any trip is 40 minutes; the duration of your trip is dependent upon the distance of your journey as well as other passengers booked at the same time.
- 6) Please do not place any extra demands upon our drivers, by requesting the driver make additional stops that are not on their manifest.  
All additional stops and/or location changes must be made through the Passenger Portal or the CAV booking office.  
Note: location changes are not guaranteed. Our booking system is not always able to accommodate location changes; drive time and distance plays a large factor in accommodating such changes.
- 7) Trip Cancellations: if you know in advance you do not plan to take scheduled trips, please call the Care-A-Van dispatch office or visit the online passenger portal to cancel your trips as soon as possible. We require at least 24 hours notice for cancellations by phone; cancellations made within 24 hours may be subject to a late cancellation fee.
- 8) **All passengers travelling on Sarnia Care-A-Vans are required to be able to manage all carry-on items by themselves without assistance from the operator.** This includes being able to safely load and unload your items on and off the vehicle. Limit shopping bags, packages and

parcels to prevent impeding another person's seating & travel on the bus. If a walker is loaded with shopping or other personal belongings, it is up to the passenger to remove all of these before the driver is required to lift/stow etc.

If any item is identified by the operator as a potential safety risk, the operator has the right to refuse an item. The City of Sarnia (Sarnia Care-A-Van) is not responsible for any damages to carry-on items.

**Operators are not required to assist customers with their carry-on items at any time.**

Should you choose to bring along a companion to assist you, please inform the dispatcher at the time of booking so that adequate seats on the van can be reserved.

- 9) Report any updates to your address, phone number, Support Person designation and changes to your mobility devices directly to the dispatching office, so we can update your profile. Updates to your mobility device allows us to, potentially, make accommodations on specific styles of Care-A-Van vehicles
- 10) During the winter, please keep lanes, side walks, and especially steps, clear of snow and ice for your safety and ours.
- 11) Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted on any City vehicle.
- 12) Knowing the accessibility of destinations/locations is the client's responsibility.

### **Additional Support - Support Persons & Companions**

During the application process, your Health Care Professional will indicate whether a Support Person, as defined under the AODA, is required at all times (always), occasionally or not at all (never).

Your support person designation will be clearly marked on your Care-A-Van registration card.

### **Support Person – “Yes, always”**

If you have been registered as requiring a Support Person ***at all times***, it is mandatory that a Support Person be present at the time of pick up and must accompany you for the duration of your trip. If a support person is not present at the time of pickup, Sarnia Care-A-Van will not be able to proceed with your trip(s) as planned. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Mandatory Support Person(s) travel free of charge on our buses when accompanying a registered passenger.

### **Support Person – “Occasionally, some of the time”**

If you have been registered as requiring a Support Person ***occasionally***, it is your responsibility to inform dispatch at the time of booking that someone will be accompanying you. If a Support Person is not present at the time of pickup, your trip may continue as booked; no additional assistance will be provided by the driver due to the absence of support.

Occasional Support Person(s) travel free of charge on our buses when accompanying a registered passenger.

### **Support Person – “No, Never”**

If you have been registered as ***never*** requiring a Support Person but you feel you need assistance on your trip, you may opt travel with a companion. Please inform dispatch at the time of booking to ensure there is enough space on the van for an additional passenger.

Companions must pay full fare for their trip(s), when accompanying registered passengers.

### **Companions**

Companions may be added to your trips provided there is space available on the bus. Please inform dispatch at the

time of booking to ensure there is enough space on the van for an additional passenger.

Companions must pay full fare for their trip(s), when accompanying registered passenger.

## **Fares**

Fares must be paid at the time of boarding through the farebox or through our smartcard system; both of which are located at the front of every vehicle.

It is the passenger's responsibility to ensure they have exact change as our drivers do not have access to cash.

For our up-to-date fare structure:

- 1) Visit our website at <https://www.sarnia.ca/transit-fares/>
- 2) Call Sarnia Transit 519-336-3271

## **Transit Fare Smart Cards**

The SMARTCARD system includes reloadable, contactless cards that allow any transit fare to be loaded including cash, tickets, monthly passes and semester passes; they offer convenience as you can load them from the comfort of your own home.

If lost or stolen, these passes are replaceable.

Smart Cards can be used on conventional/fixed route Sarnia Transit buses and Sarnia Care-A-Van buses.

For more information:

Visit [www.sarnia.ca](http://www.sarnia.ca)

Email [cav@sarnia.ca](mailto:cav@sarnia.ca) or [transit@sarnia.ca](mailto:transit@sarnia.ca)



## **Booking Trips - Request for Service**

### **1) Online Passenger Portal**

Visit our Online passenger Portal at

<https://booksarniacareavan.tripsarkhost.com>

Refer to the instruction booklet sent in our registration package for instruction on how to register your account and begin booking trips

- Bookings can be made through the Passenger Portal 7 days a week, Sunday through Saturday from 9:00am - 12midnight
- Trip requests can be made in advance anywhere from 2 hours up to 14 days (including same day and next day trip requests)
- Allows you to view details of all your upcoming trips at your convenience
- Allows trip cancellations with at least 2 hours in advance penalty free

### **2) Telephone Care-A-Van Booking & Dispatch Office**

Telephone the Dispatch Office at (519) 336-3789

Leave a voicemail message with the following information:

- your name
- the date of your request
- your destination location
- desired pickup time
- return destination location
- desired return time

Your booking will be scheduled and you will receive an automated notification via Voice Call, SMS(Text message) or Email message

***Our automated notification system cannot process incomplete requests or requests lacking critical information.***

- Bookings can be made through Care-A-Van Dispatch Office:  
Monday-Thursday 9am – 3pm; Friday 9am – 12pm
  - Trip requests can be made in advance anywhere from 1 day up to 14 days
- \*Note: Currently, same day requests **can** only be made through our online Passenger Portal
- Our new system automatically sends out Trip Reminder notifications the day before your booking

## **NOTES:**