



## **COTA**

### **Northeast On-Demand Pilot Public FAQs**

*Updated: 5/21/20*

#### **What is the COTA/Plus Northeast On-Demand Pilot?**

This COTA/Plus pilot was created to serve customers who are impacted by the temporary suspension of COTA Lines 25 (Brice), 35 (Dublin-Granville), and 45 (New Albany). Because fixed-route service has been scaled back, COTA has launched an on-demand microtransit service for customers who still need access to essential needs (food, care and jobs) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **What is Microtransit?**

Microtransit is an on-demand mobility solution that offers point-to-point, shared ride service, operating on a more flexible schedule than fixed-route service. The goal is to use microtransit within a defined zone to connect to COTA's nearby bus stops. Trips can be scheduled through the COTA Plus mobile application or by phone.

#### **What is the defined zone?**

The defined zone for this pilot includes portions of Columbus, Westerville, Gahanna, and New Albany. COTA customers can travel to or from any transit stop or transit center within the defined zone. Passengers who request additional mobility assistance will enjoy curb-to-curb service.”

#### **Is there any charge for this service?**

Not currently per COTA's emergency operations. If COTA resumes fares for fixed-route service while this pilot is operational, that could change.

#### **Can I use this service to connect to a bus line?**

Yes, this pilot provides on-demand access to connect with nearly one dozen transit lines including CMAX and Line 10 (East-West Broad).

#### **Do I have to use the COTA Plus App?**

No, you can also call COTA Customer Care at (614) 228-1776 to request a ride.

#### **What are the hours of operation?**

This pilot is available from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week.

#### **How will I know my trip is safe?**

A COTA-branded vehicle will arrive at your stop and the operator will wear a COTA-branded uniform. When you book your trip on the COTA/Plus app, the app will send you a message with the vehicle license plate number and a picture of the vehicle. Because this is a pilot service, the vehicle might be branded as either COTA Plus or COTA Mainstream.

#### **Do Social Distancing rules still apply?**

Yes. Like all of our transit service, this pilot is for essential travel only until such time when social distancing rules are eased. That means trip for access to food, work, personal care, or to care for others. This is a shared-ride service, so you may

be picked up with one other person. Only two customers can travel in a microtransit vehicle during this pandemic. Families with more than two members, however, will be permitted to travel together.

**Are masks required to board?**

Yes, all customers must wear a mask to board a COTA transit vehicle. Masks must be worn throughout the trip. A mask can be medical or homemade, and can also be a scarf or bandana. It must be secured to your face and cover your mouth and nose.

**Why is COTA still operating?**

Under state and federal guidelines, public transit is classified as essential service. Without COTA, Central Ohio residents would not have access to food, care or employment. Our operators, supported by our vehicle maintenance team and Customer Care representatives, heroically provide this essential service to thousands of people every day.

**How long will this service last?**

This is a three-month pilot beginning May 26, 2020. COTA will evaluate customer needs regularly to determine if the service should continue or if fixed-route transit service should return to the area.