



# THE RIDE GUIDE



The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has created this large print Guide for you. This publication is designed to assist you in using THE RIDE. On request, to the Office for Transportation Access, this information can also be made available in alternate formats of Braille or audio as well as electronically.



# THE RIDE GUIDE

## Welcome to THE RIDE, a Shared-ride Service

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is committed to providing quality public transportation to all travelers. THE RIDE is our Paratransit program, which provides door-to-door public transportation to eligible people, like your self, who cannot use public transit (subways, buses and trains), all or some of the time, because of a physical, cognitive or mental disability. THE RIDE is administered by the MBTA's Office for Transportation Access (OTA), and operated in compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). **It is a shared-ride service.** This means you should expect to be traveling with other customers who are going in the same general direction. Normally, a trip's duration will be an hour or less, and is based on distance and others who are traveling. Occasionally drivers may be diverted because another customer missed her/his return pick-up. These unforeseeable events and others, such as inclement weather and traffic congestion, may increase your travel time. THE RIDE is also available to ADA certified out-of-area and/or out-of-state visitors with prior arrangement. (See Page 9)

For more information, including alternate format requests of this material, please contact the MBTA's Administrative Office of the Office for Transportation Access (OTA) at:

**800-533-6282(V)** toll-free in state, **617-222-5123(V)**,  
**617-222-5415(TTY)** or via Email to **[THERIDE@MBTA.com](mailto:THERIDE@MBTA.com)**

Additional information on our services can be found on our website [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) [Riding the T](#) → [Accessible Services](#) → [THE RIDE](#). Please take the time to read this Guide, as it provides valuable information on how to use THE RIDE.

### Hours of Operation

Regular Service is available 7 days a week, generally from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m., including Holidays. Subscription Service, which is explained further in this guide, will not be provided on Holidays.

### Personal Care Assistants (PCA) and Guests

PCAs and guests must travel to and from the same destination at the same time as the certified passenger. If you require a PCA, your assistant can accompany you on each trip free of charge.



## Fare

The local **one-way fare** for each registered passenger and each guest is **\$2.00**. RIDE customers must maintain a balance of monies in their individual RIDE accounts. We offer you four methods to do this:

1. **Call us at 1-888-844-0355**, Monday–Friday 7AM–11PM and Saturday and Sunday 8AM-5PM, except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. Major credit/debit cards as noted above accepted. Have your RIDE ID # and credit/debit card ready. Allow 2 business days for posting.
2. **Online at [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) Fares & Passes → THE RIDE.** Master Card, Visa, Discover or American Express credit cards or a debit card supported by Master Card or Visa are accepted. Allow 2 business days for posting.
3. **Make payable** and send a check or money order noting your RIDE ID # to: **MBTA - THE RIDE Fares, 10 Park Plaza - Rm. 5000 Boston, MA 02116.** Allow 5 business days for posting.
4. **Visit** the System-wide Accessibility office at **Back Bay Station** – Orange Line/Commuter Rail **145 Dartmouth Street**, Boston, Monday - Friday, 8:30AM - 5PM. Cash, checks, money order and major credit/debit cards as noted above accepted. Have your RIDE ID # ready. Posting is within 1 hour.

**IMPORTANT:** You **MUST include your customer RIDE ID number on all** correspondence, including the 'memo' line of your check or money order. Each RIDE ID deposit requires a separate check or money order. Your cashed check or confirmation number is your receipt. *For posting inquiries to your account call 617-222-5717(V) or 617-222-5415(TTY).*

A minimum deposit of \$12.00 must be entered into your account and sufficient funds need to be maintained at all times to complete a desired trip. You are responsible for your account balance, which can be determined at any time via the Internet at [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) [Riding the T](#) → [Accessible Services](#) → [THE RIDE: Reservations](#) or by calling your Contractor or the Administrative Office of the Office for Transportation Access.

THE RIDE fares are debited from your account as you board the vehicle. THE RIDE **is not** required to transport any persons who do not maintain adequate funds in their RIDE account. A guest is charged an equal fare. Only a PCA traveling with THE RIDE customer is permitted to ride free of charge.



# THE RIDE GUIDE

## How to Arrange for a Trip

Three Contractors provide THE RIDE service for our customers. Trips are booked by calling the Contractor serving your city or town of residence. All lines are recorded for quality control purposes. Any Contractor serves Boston directly. The Contractor serving your city or town can arrange transfers between Contractors for trips to other service areas. Boston residents may call any Contractor for service within Boston. Contractors should also provide you with your current fare balance when making a reservation.

### **Reservation hours: 8AM – 4PM, 7 days a week, including Holidays**

<b>Boston</b>	Boston residents only, Any Contractor	<b>Voice</b>	<b>Toll-Free</b>	<b>TTY</b>
<b>North</b>	Greater Lynn Senior Services, <b>GLSS</b>	<b>1-888-319-7433, 1-800-621-0420</b>		
<b>Northwest</b>	Veterans Transportation, <b>VT</b>	<b>1-877-765-7433, 1-888-553-8294</b>		
<b>South</b>	Joint Venture of TTI and YCN, <b>JV</b>	<b>1- 888-920-7433, 1-888-607-7787</b>		

### **THE RIDE Cities and Towns by Service Area**

<b>Boston</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>Northwest</b>	<b>South</b>
Allston	Beverly	Arlington	Boston
Back Bay	Boston	Bedford	Braintree
Brighton	Chelsea	Belmont	Canton
Charlestown	Danvers	Boston	Cohasset
Chinatown	Everett	Brookline	Dedham
Dorchester	Lynn	Burlington	Dover
Downtown Boston	Lynnfield	Cambridge	Hingham
East Boston	Malden	Concord	Holbrook
Fenway	Marblehead	Lexington	Hull
Hyde Park	Melrose	Lincoln	Medfield
Jamaica Plain	Middleton	Medford	Milton
Mattapan	Nahant	Newton	Needham
North End	Peabody	Somerville	Norwood
Roslindale	Reading	Waltham	Quincy
Roxbury	Revere	Watertown	Randolph
South Boston	Salem	Weston	Sharon
South End	Saugus	Wilmington	Walpole
West Roxbury	Stoneham	Winchester	Wellesley
	Swampscott	Woburn	Westwood
	Topsfield		Weymouth
	Wakefield		
	Wenham		
	Winthrop		



## **THE RIDE GUIDE**

Trips may be booked from one to fourteen days in advance. A reservationist from your Contractor will guide you through the process. You will be asked for your customer ID number, addresses and all necessary information to schedule your trip. The reservationist will tell you whether or not your account has sufficient funds for your trip request to be completed. Trips to appointments are scheduled by arrival time. This is to ensure that you are scheduled to arrive before your appointment time. Trips returning are scheduled by departure time to ensure that we allow time for you to conclude your appointment. Requested arrival and return times must be at least one hour apart.

It would be helpful to your Contractor, when making your reservation, to advise them if you will be traveling with a PCA, a guest, a minor or service animal. Minors who are 5 years and younger and/or other minors weighing fewer than 40 lbs. require the use of a child safety seat. Minors who weigh more than 40 lbs. but are under 5 years old must ride in a booster seat. Minors who are 5 years or older, and weigh more than 40 lbs., require the use of a safety belt or booster seat. (MGL C90 S7AA ) Check with your Contractor. School transportation of minors (Grades K-12) is NOT provided.

You may review or change any trip in the fourteen-day period up to 4PM. on the day before service by calling your Contractor. After the close of reservations, trips for the following day are scheduled. Schedules are created to share rides for passengers traveling similar routes. Request times may be adjusted to allow passengers to share the ride.

Requests for same-day trips, or requests for next-day trips after 4PM can be placed through your Contractor's dispatcher. Although these requests cannot be guaranteed, it is often possible to provide the service.

The goal of scheduling is to make the most efficient use of vehicles to ensure the service is available to all who need it. At the same time each user should experience service that is sensible and appropriate to his or her needs. The number of people using the service, and the time of day affect, the total time needed for your trip. Travel time for trips that require less than 30 minutes via the most direct route should not exceed one hour. Travel for longer trips should not exceed twice the most direct travel time. When scheduling is complete you will be called the evening before (prior to 9PM) with your times for the next days trips.

- **Note:** If you do not receive a call by 9PM, call the Contractor you booked your trip with to be sure the trip has been scheduled.

If you would like to **place trip requests via the Internet, or by using the Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) system**, call your Contractor for instructions.



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## How to Cancel a Trip

Trips must be canceled **as far in advance** as possible so that THE RIDE can schedule and accommodate others. Your cooperation in this matter significantly impacts the Contractor's ability to serve other customers. At least one hour's notice to your Contractor is required to avoid the trip being recorded as a *No Show*.

## Who is Considered a No Show

You will be considered a *No Show* when you request a trip, receive confirmation, and then fail to cancel with at least one hour's notice to your Contractor or you fail to show up within 5 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time.

## On the Day of Your Trip

Be ready to travel 5 minutes before your scheduled pick-up and be prepared to wait up to 15 minutes after that time. The driver must wait for you for 5 minutes from the time of the scheduled pick-up. If you are not at the pick-up location the driver will obtain clearance, from her or his dispatcher, to leave after waiting 5 minutes. Please do not leave your pick-up location to call before the end of the 15 minutes waiting period.

- If THE RIDE vehicle does not arrive by the end of the 15 minutes period, please call your Contractor who will assist you in locating the vehicle and giving you its estimated time of arrival (ETA).
- If you need to request a change to a trip location or time, call your Contractor.
- If you know you will be detained at an appointment call your Contractor and ask to be put on "will-call" status. Then, when you are ready call your Contractor and they will arrange a new pick-up time for you.
- If you wish to cancel a trip, call your Contractor.

There are many changes to schedules due to traffic problems, customer delays, and weather. At each of the three Contractors, dispatch monitors and adjusts the activities of their vehicles to try to keep schedules running on time. Dispatch interacts with customers and drivers, as well as, our office, OTA, to troubleshoot problems. If you require any changes, please notify your Contractor as soon as possible. You will not be left stranded.



## **What is Subscription Service**

Paratransit Subscription service is for RIDE customers who make a trip reservation, which starts at the same place and ends at the same destination at the same time, three or more days a week. You may request to have these trips automatically scheduled, which eliminates the need to call in advance for each trip. Call your Contractor to request this service. **Note: Subscription service is subject to availability. This service is NOT provided on Holidays.**

## **Keep Your Profile Current**

If you have a change in your mobility status, i.e. walker to wheelchair, acquired a service animal, etc., or you have moved, changed your phone number, have a new emergency contact, legally changed your name or have a new Email address, etc., we ask that you contact OTA and provide the updated information to us. Family members are also urged to call us when a customer is deceased so we may inactivate the customer profile and arrange for any fare refunds from their RIDE account. Legal documentation may be requested in some cases.

## **Driver Assistance**

In order to properly serve our RIDE customers, all drivers have received sensitivity and safety training. If you are a wheelchair or scooter user, the driver will apply the MBTA supplied body belt immediately upon greeting you. Your driver will assist you to and from the vehicle by providing door-to-door service. However, a driver is not allowed to enter any buildings beyond the main door or lobby area. She or he will assist individuals in manual wheelchairs over one curb and/or step. They are not permitted to carry an individual or their mobility devices. A driver will collapse and securely store in the RIDE vehicle's trunk or cargo area, an ambulatory customer's manual wheelchair, walker or cane. The driver will assist you to board the vehicle. Even when you are accompanied by a PCA, the driver will assist you with boarding and disembarking the vehicle. The driver will also fasten and unfasten seatbelt/shoulder harnesses as part of the vehicle's wheelchair/scooter securement system. All passengers in the vehicle must wear a seatbelt. If you or your guest has packages, the driver will assist with a manageable number of shopping bags, to the door of your destination. Assistance with 3 pieces of luggage per person, not to exceed 40 lbs. each, will be provided for you and your PCA. Keep in mind that you are using a shared-ride service and space is limited. For the safety of all our customers, drivers are prohibited from using personal cell phones or any other personal electronic devices that may be hand-free or not, while providing RIDE service.



## **THE RIDE GUIDE**

### **Appropriate Behavior on THE RIDE**

- All passengers, ambulatory or wheelchair/scooter user must wear a seatbelt.
- You may not stand while the vehicle is in motion.
- Wheelchair/scooter users must wear the body belt supplied by the driver throughout the trip.
- Smoking is not allowed.
- Animals (i.e. pets which may cause allergic reactions to others) are not allowed, with the exception of Service Animals.
- Consumption of food and/or beverages is prohibited, unless required for dietary and/or medical purposes and you have advised the driver.
- No tipping or other gratuities are allowed.
- Personal audio devices, i.e. radios may only be used with headphones.
- Customers may ask that the AM/FM radios installed on RIDE vehicles be turned off, on, or volume adjusted, as they prefer.
- Customers should be courteous to other passengers and drivers.
- Please note that personal hygiene and the use of perfumes can be objectionable to others or cause allergic reactions.

### **Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT)**

The Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA is a consumer body composed primarily of persons with disabilities, RIDE customers, advocates and representatives of disability advocacy groups and agencies who advise and make recommendations to the MBTA regarding accessible transportation for both our Fixed Route services (buses, subway and trains) as well as THE RIDE. Anyone is invited to participate. The goal of AACT is to achieve 100% accessible public transportation. An elected Executive Board governs AACT. AACT members and other interested persons meet publicly each month. RIDE issues such as, driver training, passenger safety, new vehicle acquisition and design, as well as, various operational issues are reviewed. The Executive Board is involved in researching and reviewing complaints for customers at the customer's request. For more information or meeting schedules contact them at **617-973-7507(V)**, **617-973-7089(TTY)** or [aact@ctps.org](mailto:aact@ctps.org). Meeting schedules for AACT are also posted in all RIDE vehicles and on the MBTA website, [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) [About the MBTA](#) → [Public Meetings](#)



## More Travel Options for RIDE Customers

As a registered user of THE RIDE you are also eligible to avail yourself of any other transportation agency’s Paratransit services in and out of the State. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Federal regulations allow you to travel as a visitor in other areas for 21 days in a 12-month period. OTA can provide you proof of your MBTA ADA Paratransit Eligibility if requested. You are required to provide this to the visiting agency in order to use their program. If you expect your travel to exceed 21 days to a particular area you may need to apply for certification through that agency. For services in other Regional Transit Authorities within Massachusetts please call 617-973-7000(V), 617-973-7306(TTY) or visit [www.eot.state.ma.us](http://www.eot.state.ma.us) navigate to Regional Transit links. Service availability, hours of service, fares and policies vary within each Regional Transit Authority (RTA). For information on possible transfer sites (MBTA - RTA) contact OTA. We do not have information on agencies outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

## Compliments/Complaints

The Office for Transportation Access expects to take your compliments and complaints and act upon them accordingly. Customers rely on THE RIDE for critical transportation services and we want you to have a good experience. By hearing from you, we can always improve. We value your input. All complaints will be investigated and responded to within 10 calendar days. Complaint information is shared with AACT, unless otherwise requested at the time you file your complaint.

To file a compliment or complaint, use the form attached to the back of this Guide, or contact our office via the following:

**MBTA-OTA  
THE RIDE  
Ten Park Plaza – 5750  
Boston, MA 02116**

**THERIDE@MBTA.COM  
800-533-6282(V) in-state toll-free  
617-222-5123(V)  
617-222-5415 (TTY)**

- **Note:** The MBTA will not tolerate any retaliation or intimidation to a customer for filing a complaint or concern. If you feel you have been subjected to these actions, by anyone connected to THE RIDE, we urge you to contact the Administrative Office of the Office for Transportation Access (OTA) or the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT) immediately.



## THE RIDE GUIDE

### **Suggestions**

The MBTA wishes to improve your travel experience on THE RIDE. You, our customers, have valued insight and we welcome your suggestions. Additionally, in these days of heightened security and safety it is especially important for us to rely on our customers and drivers; so please remember, *“If you see or sense something, say something”*.

### **MBTA Resources**

The following MBTA programs and contacts are available to make transportation easy and accessible for all travelers:

- ✓ For our deaf and hard of hearing customers please utilize a “Relay Operator” when a TTY line is not available for your use.
- ✓ [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) “Rider Tools’ for all Transit Updates and Travel Information
- ✓ MBTA Police Emergency: 617-222-1212(V), 617-222-1200(TTY)
- ✓ MBTA Senior and Access Program Information  
[www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) [Riding the T](#) → [Accessible Services](#) →  
Reduced Fare CharlieCard (buses, subways and trains) for seniors and persons with disabilities are available at Back Bay Station on the Orange Line. For information call 800-543-8287(V) toll-free-in-state, 617-222-5438(V), 617-222-5854(TTY).
- ✓ Elevator / Escalator Update Line  
800-392-6100, press 6 or [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) ‘Rider Tools’  
617-222-2828(V) 617-222-5854(TTY), Mon- Fri., 8:30 am-5:00 pm
- ✓ For all other accessibility related questions concerning MBTA buses, subway, trains or commuter boat or for Travel Information call 800-392-6100(V), 617-222-3200(V), 617-222-5145 TTY
- ✓ To submit an On-Time Service Guarantee, ask your RIDE driver for an on-time card or go online to:  
[http://www.mbta.com/customer\\_support/on\\_time\\_service\\_guarantee/?step=1](http://www.mbta.com/customer_support/on_time_service_guarantee/?step=1)



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COMPLAINT or COMPLIMENT for CUSTOMER RIDE ID # \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME FIRST NAME MI

STREET ADDRESS APT / UNIT# ZIPCODE

CITY / TOWN TELEPHONE # Email Address

INCIDENT: DATE (MM / DD /YY) TIME (00:00 A.M. / P.M.) VEHICLE #

RECEIVED in MBTA: DATE (MM / DD /YY) BY: MBTA - OTA STAFF NAME

COMPLAINT TYPE # \_\_\_\_\_ Select one or more

- 1) DIFFICULTY IN GETTING A RIDE
- 2) CONDITION OF VEHICLE
- 3) COMFORT OF RIDE
- 4) PROMPTNESS OF PICK-UP/DROP-OFF
- 5) SCHEDULING PROBLEM
- 6) DISPATCHER PROBLEM
- 7) PROBLEM WITH RESERVATIONIST
- 8) PROBLEM WITH TELEPHONE
- 9) PROBLEM WITH DRIVER
- 10) OTHER

COMPLIMENT TYPE # \_\_\_\_\_ Select one or more

- 1) GENERAL
- 2) DRIVER
- 3) RESERVATION
- 4) DISPATCH

Comments:

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Attach additional information if necessary and send completed information to:

MBTA - OFFICE FOR TRANSPORTATION ACCESS  
 10 PARK PLAZA- 5750  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116  
 617-222-6119(FAX) or Email to [THERIDE@MBTA.COM](mailto:THERIDE@MBTA.COM)

Or contact us at: 800-533-6282(V); 617-222-5123(V); 617-222-5415(TTY)

If you would NOT like a copy forwarded to AACT, please check here \_\_\_\_\_

