

# Access in Motion



## Your Guide to Accessible Travel on the MBTA

 Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority

**massDOT**  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation





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# Dear MBTA Rider,

At the MBTA, we know that a transit system that's accessible to people with disabilities benefits all our riders—whether it's older adults, parents with strollers, or commuters who ride every day. That's why we strive to be the model for accessible public transportation.

Our system is more accessible than ever, including an all low-floor, ramp-equipped bus fleet, the ongoing expansion of elevators in our stations, the Mobility Center with free travel training and accessible transit resources, and much more.

In the pages that follow, we'll take you on a journey through our bus, subway, Commuter Rail, ferry, and paratransit systems. Along the way, you'll discover the policies and features that power access in motion at the MBTA.







# The MBTA and Disability Advocates Put Access in Gear

The MBTA works in partnership with local disability advocates and organizations to make accessibility a priority in everything we do. If it's been a while since you used the T, you'll discover a host of improvements system-wide, including:

- A 100% low-floor bus fleet with onboard ramps at all front doors.
- More accessible stations than ever before (with more to come!).
- Station elevators that are operational more than 99% of the time.
- Our most accessible Red and Orange Line cars — and a new fleet of 100% accessible Green Line cars on the way.
- Audio/visual stop and destination announcements on vehicles.



**Joanne Daniels-Finegold**



- Audio/visual real-time information—including vehicle arrivals, service diversions, and elevator availability—at stations and select stops.
- An improved customer complaint-resolution process.
- An improved accessibility monitoring (a.k.a. “secret shopper”) program for ongoing quality control.
- Additional personnel to provide assistance in stations and enhanced accessibility training for all staff.
- Many of these improvements are the result of the 2006 Daniels-Finegold settlement agreement and the creation of the Department of System-Wide Accessibility in 2007. To learn more, visit [mbta.com/accessibility/history](https://mbta.com/accessibility/history)

# Join RTAG to Help Advance Change at the MBTA

Be a part of access in motion! Join the Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG), a community-based group that advises the MBTA on transportation matters impacting people with disabilities and older adults.

Members of RTAG have worked with the MBTA to:

- Improve third-party shuttle diversion access.
- Improve safety and awareness around bike lanes adjacent to bus stops.
- Enhance aspects of The RIDE paratransit service.

Anyone who would like to participate is welcome. General members of RTAG have the opportunity to:

- Attend public forums.
- Provide input and feedback about system accessibility.
- Meet with and hear policy and procedure updates from the Department of System-Wide Accessibility, The RIDE, and other departments across the MBTA.

To find out about upcoming RTAG meetings and additional information:

**Visit:** [mbta.com/rtag](https://mbta.com/rtag)

**Email:** [rtagboston@bostoncil.org](mailto:rtagboston@bostoncil.org)





Elevator is out of service for upgrades

### Elevator Refreshment Program

- MBTA is upgrading elevators to improve reliability
- Focus is on most used, oldest and least reliable units
- Upgrading internal components, elevators will run more smoothly
- Upgrades will take ~8 weeks to complete
- Notice of closures & alternative service information will be posted online and at stations in stations
- First Upgrades
  - Braintree RT1 - complete
  - Park Street R61 - currently in process
  - Downtown Crossing, State Park St, Downtown Crossing, North Station, South Station - Public

Elevator is out of service for upgrades

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MBTA

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ADVOCACY SERVICE

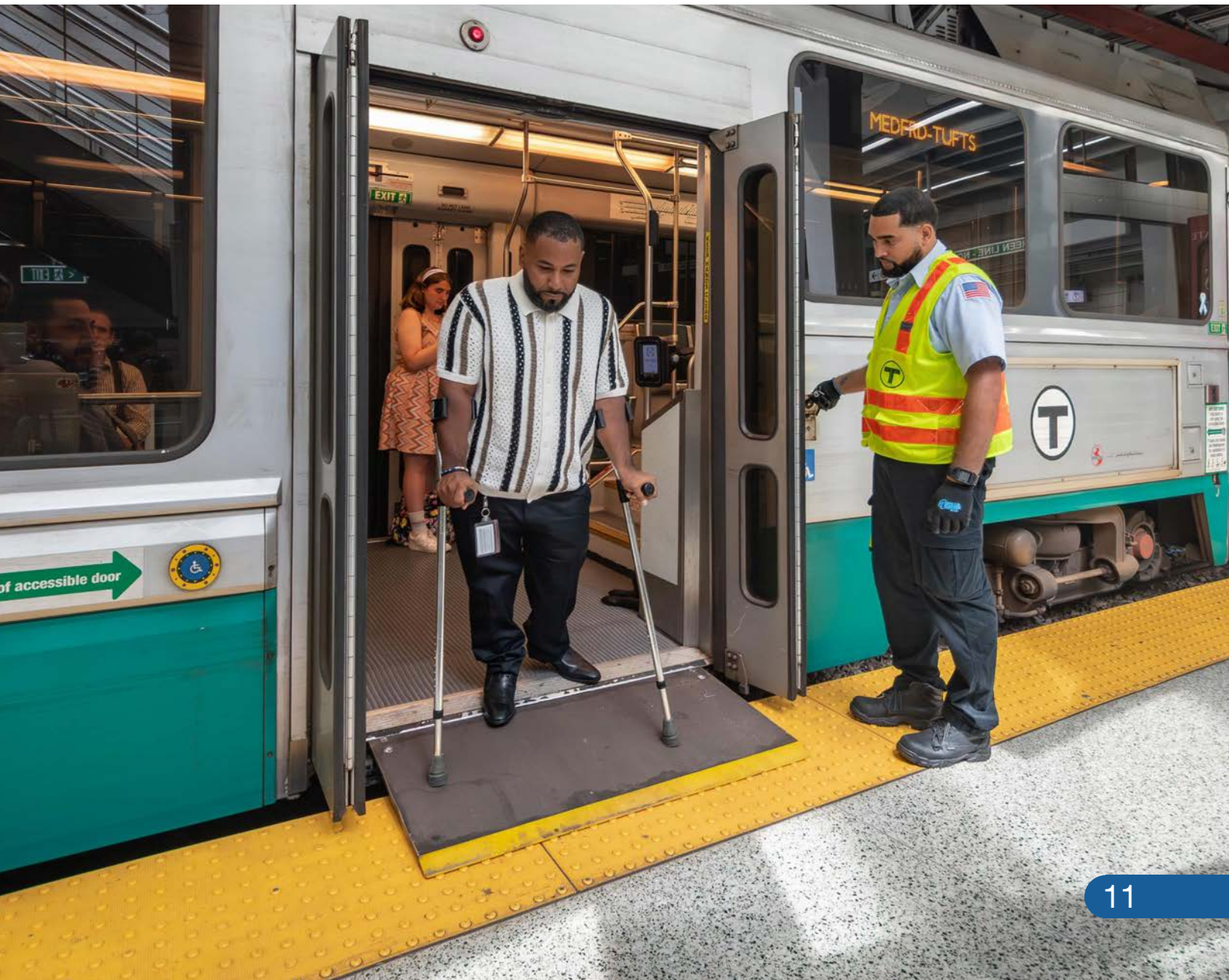
# Rider-Friendly Policies in Place at Every Turn

At the MBTA, we're committed to making your journey a positive one. That's why we have consistent, rider-friendly accessibility policies in place no matter where you travel on our fixed-route system. Key policies include:

- MBTA staff will honor all reasonable requests for assistance, including but not limited to:
  - Boarding and exiting MBTA vehicles
  - Navigating MBTA stations (including providing sighted guide)
  - Finding a seat in a station or on a vehicle
  - Using a fare box or fare vending machine
- All riders have the right to use accessibility features, including but not limited to:
  - Elevators and escalators
  - Ramps and bridge plates
  - High-level platforms
  - Accessible fare gates
- Riders who use service animals are welcome in all MBTA vehicles, stations, and facilities during all hours of operation (the animal must be under control of its handler and not pose a direct threat to others).



- MBTA staff will help riders locate priority seating upon request. If all priority seating is already occupied, staff are required to ask other riders to move.
  - Note: If other riders are not willing to move, staff may not force them to do so; a rider using priority seating could have a non-apparent disability they do not wish to disclose
- MBTA staff will never ask about the nature of a rider's disability. Riders with non-apparent disabilities are not obligated to share that information in order to use accessibility features on the system.



# Get On Board for Less with Our Reduced Fare Programs

With MBTA reduced fare programs, **riders with disabilities and Medicare cardholders, riders aged 65+, and riders aged 18 to 64 enrolled in state assistance** may qualify to ride the bus, subway, Commuter Rail, and ferry for roughly half the standard fare. **Riders who are legally blind**, as well as an accompanying sighted guide, may be eligible to ride for free.

Users of The RIDE aged 65+ and users aged 18 to 64 enrolled in state assistance may now also qualify for **reduced fares on RIDE trips**.

To find out more about MBTA reduced fare programs or apply online:

**Visit:** [mbta.com/reduced](https://mbta.com/reduced)

**Call:** MBTA Customer Support

617-222-3200 / Toll-free 1-800-392-6100

711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers

## **Stop by in person:**

Riders with disabilities and Medicare cardholders, riders aged 65+, and riders who are legally blind can get help applying for reduced fares by visiting the Charlie Service Center, located at 296 Washington Street (next to State Street Station). The Charlie Service Center can also provide assistance with:



- Replacing a damaged or expired CharlieCard.
- Linking your reduced fare program benefits to a contactless payment method.
- Purchasing bus, subway, Commuter Rail, or ferry passes.
- Adding value to a RIDE account.

Before you go, check the Charlie Service Center's current operating hours by calling the MBTA Customer Support number above or visiting [mbta.com/charlieservicecenter](https://www.mbta.com/charlieservicecenter).



# Chart Your Course with Accessible Trip Planning Tools

Going to a concert? Meeting friends for dinner? Our fixed-route trip planning tools will help get you from here to there:

- MBTA Customer Support: A representative will be happy to help you plan your trip over the phone.

Call 617-222-3200 / Toll-free 1-800-392-6100,  
711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers

- MBTA Trip Planner: When you select the “Prefer accessible trips” checkbox, our Trip Planner will provide you with one or more accessible routes to your destination, as well as notify you of issues like elevator or escalator outages that may impact your travel. Visit [mbta.com/trip-planner](https://mbta.com/trip-planner).

Just want to check on the accessibility of a station along your route? You can also:

- Look for the International Symbol of Accessibility (the blue and white “wheelchair symbol”) on MBTA system maps to identify accessible stations.
- Visit [mbta.com/stops](https://mbta.com/stops) to look up specific accessibility features by station.





- Stay on top of elevator or escalator service outage.

**Call the Elevator/Escalator Update Line at 617-222-2828,  
711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers**

**Visit [mbta.com/alerts/access](https://mbta.com/alerts/access)**

- Check it out on the app! Station accessibility, elevator outages, Commuter Rail track changes, and other info and alerts are available on MBTA Go, our accessible mobile app for iOS or Android.
- Want to make sure your bus stop location is still the same? Visit [mbta.com/bus-stop-changes](https://mbta.com/bus-stop-changes).





# Access in Motion... Whichever Way You Go

Whether you're traveling by bus, subway, Commuter Rail, ferry, or The RIDE you can find features that make it easier than ever for you to get to your destination.









# BUS

## Bus Access Features

All MBTA buses are accessible to riders with disabilities. Features you can find on our buses include:

- 100% low-floor fleet (only one small step between the curb and the floor of the bus).
- Onboard ramps that can be deployed at the front door of each bus.
  - Note: During service diversions, you may encounter buses provided by third-party contractors with high floors and wheelchair lifts
- Kneelers that lower the bus for easier boarding/exiting.
- Priority seating for riders with disabilities and older adults.
- Two securement areas for riders who use a wheeled mobility device.
- Audio/visual route, stop, and destination announcements.

## Bus Access Tips

- Bus operators are required to pull as close to the curb as possible at every stop. If they're unable to pull close to the curb, the operator will help you board/exit at a safe location nearby. You can also ask the operator to reposition the bus for easier boarding/exiting if needed.





- If you use a wheeled mobility device, the bus operator may pre-board you to ensure space in the securement area. Bus operators are required to attach 4 securement straps (for wheelchairs) or 3-4 securement straps (for scooters) to the frame of your device.
- Bus operators will help you locate priority seating upon request. If all priority seating is already occupied, operators are required to ask other riders to move.
  - Note: If other riders are not willing to move, operators may not force them to do so; a rider using priority seating could have a non-apparent disability they do not wish to disclose



# SUBWAY

## Subway Access Features

The majority of MBTA subway stations are accessible to riders with disabilities—and accessibility is constantly expanding. Features you can find on our subway system include:

- Elevators, escalators, and ramps.
- Bridge plates that span the gap between the platform and the train.
- Tactile warning strips at the platform edge.
- Wider, accessible fare gates with low-mounted fare card targets for easier reach.





- Fare vending machines with braille and audio features.
- Customer Information Displays in station lobbies that show important service information, including elevator availability.
- Station call boxes that can be used for general assistance or in an emergency.
- Audio/visual real-time train arrival information.
- Audio/visual stop and destination announcements.
- Priority seating for riders with disabilities and older adults.
- Seating areas for riders who use a wheeled mobility device.

## **Subway Access Tips**

- On the Red, Orange, and Blue Lines, mobile bridge plates are available for riders who may need assistance boarding/exiting because of a gap between the platform and the train floor. If you would like to use a mobile bridge plate, just ask an MBTA staff member to assist you.
- On the Green Line, onboard bridge plates are available to provide for accessible boarding/exiting of low-floor train cars. If you would like to use an onboard bridge plate, just ask a Green Line train operator to assist you.
- If you have any reasonable request for assistance but can't find an MBTA staff member, you can use one of the call boxes located throughout our subway stations. To use a call box to request assistance, press the button labeled "Info" and wait for a dispatcher to respond.



# COMMUTER RAIL

## Commuter Rail Access Features

The majority of MBTA Commuter Rail stations are accessible to riders with disabilities—and accessibility is constantly expanding. Features you can find on our Commuter Rail system include:

- Elevators, escalators, and ramps.
- Full high-level and mini high-level platforms for level boarding.
- Bridge plates that span the gap between the platform and the train floor.
- Tactile warning strips at the platform edge.
- Audio/visual train arrival, departure, and track information at most stations.
- Audio stop announcements on all trains; visual on most.
- Priority seating for riders with disabilities and older adults.
- Seating areas for riders who use a wheeled mobility device.

## Commuter Rail Access Tips

- Commuter Rail stations that have full high-level platforms or mini high-level platforms allow for level boarding/exiting of



trains (boarding/exiting without stairs). The type of platforms available at stations will vary. The conductor may ask you for your destination upon boarding to confirm that the location is accessible and that you will be able to safely exit the train.

- When boarding from/exiting to a mini-high platform, riders can request that the train be repositioned so they can board/exit from the open car of their choosing.

- If you use a wheeled mobility device, the conductor will deploy a mobile bridge plate to span the gap between the platform and the train floor. All riders have the right to use a mobile bridge plate upon request.



- If you need assistance such as finding a platform or buying a ticket for your train, station staff are available at North Station, South Station, and Back Bay Station to assist you.
- You can check the MBTA Go app for accessible real-time arrivals and service changes, such as if your train is delayed or arriving on a different track.



# FERRY

## Ferry Access Features

The majority of MBTA ferries and docks are accessible to riders with disabilities. Features you can find on our ferry system include:

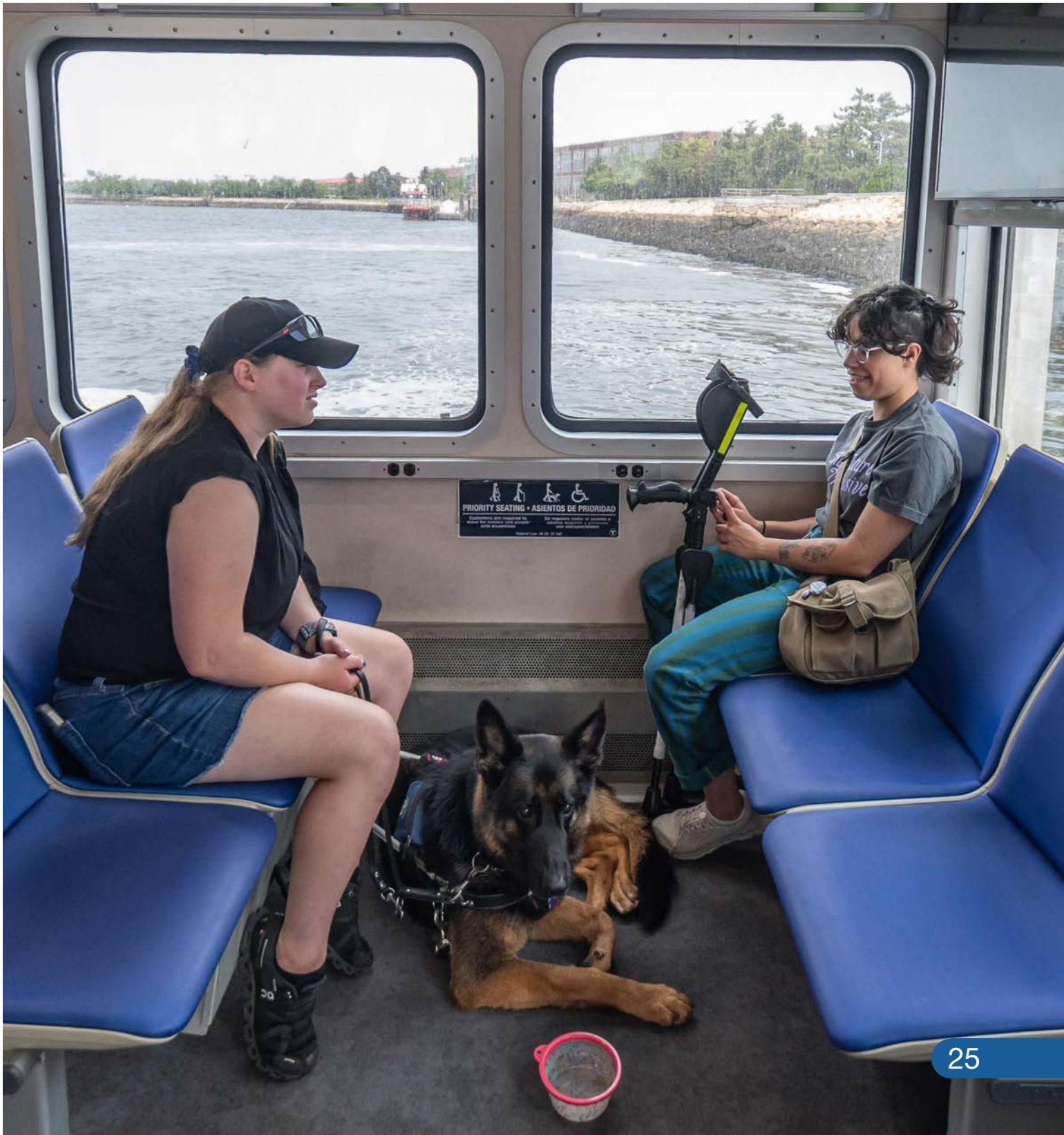
- Accessible floating docks.
- Mobile bridge plates that span the gap between the dock and the ferry.
- Audio/visual stop and destination announcements.
- Priority seating for riders with disabilities and older adults.
- Seating areas for riders that use a wheeled mobility device.

## Ferry Access Tips

- The majority of the MBTA's floating ferry docks are accessible. You can wait on a ferry dock until a crew member tells you it's safe to board.
- Given changing tide levels and structural aspects of the specific ferry and gangplank used to board the ferry, you may encounter significant slopes, narrow walkways, and physical challenges even at accessible docks. For power wheelchair users, aspects of the wheelchair (e.g., center wheel drive, rear wheel drive) might affect the boarding process. At all docks, wait until a crew member tells you it is safe to proceed and notify them if you need any assistance, particularly when crossing the bridge plate.



- The availability of priority seating and seating areas for riders who use a wheeled mobility device will vary depending on the type of ferry in service. You can always ask a crew member to assist you in locating a seat.





# THE RIDE

## The RIDE Paratransit Service

The RIDE is the MBTA's door-to-door, shared-ride paratransit service. The RIDE is operated by the MBTA in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability that prevents you from using the MBTA fixed-route system all or some of the time, The RIDE may be able to assist with your public transportation needs.

The RIDE is available in 58 cities and towns in the greater Boston area. To access The RIDE, you must call the Mobility Center to schedule an in-person interview to determine if you're eligible (a free round trip to and from the interview will be provided by The RIDE). Once you're approved, you can schedule trips from 1 to 5 days in advance.

To find out more about The RIDE and how to apply:

**Visit:** [mbta.com/theride](https://mbta.com/theride)

**Call:** MBTA Mobility Center

617-337-2727

711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers





# The MBTA Mobility Center—Your Next Stop for Accessible Transit Resources

The MBTA Mobility Center is a one-stop shop for accessible transit information, education, and community resources.

## **What to Expect at the Mobility Center**

Based on your individual needs, staff at the Mobility Center are ready to help with a variety of services, including:

- Registering for group or one-on-one travel training.
  - Applying for Reduced Fare CharlieCards.
  - Planning accessible trips on the fixed-route system or The RIDE.
  - Scheduling and completing a RIDE eligibility assessment.
  - Using your smartphone or computer to check elevator outages or to request rideshares via The RIDE Flex program.
  - Connecting to additional community transportation options.
- Mobility Center resources are available in person or via phone, and in multiple languages. Our team will start by asking a few questions about what you're looking for to help find the services that are right for you.











## Free Travel Training

The MBTA offers free travel training services to help people with disabilities and older adults learn to travel independently on the fixed-route bus, subway, Commuter Rail, and ferry system. Training topics include:

- General safety on the system.
- Reading T schedules and planning routes.
- Boarding and exiting MBTA vehicles.
- Buying standard or reduced fare CharlieCards.
- Rider and operator responsibilities.
- Accessing information about MBTA services online and via mobile apps.

A variety of training types are available, including small-group travel training held at the MBTA or at community organizations, and one-on-one travel training that can be tailored to individual needs. Virtual and hybrid training options are available upon request.

To contact the MBTA Mobility Center:

**Visit:** [mbta.com/mobilitycenter](https://mbta.com/mobilitycenter)

**Call:** 617-337-2727

711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers

**Email:** [howtotravel@mbta.com](mailto:howtotravel@mbta.com)

# Keep Rolling Smoothly with Customer Support

If you encounter an accessibility issue, big or small, while using our fixed-route services, let us know by contacting our Customer Support team. You can also contact Customer Support to ask a question, make a suggestion—or share a positive experience with us!





When reporting a complaint or commendation to Customer Support, specify that your comments are related to accessibility. When filling out the **Customer Support form online**, be sure to also select the “accessibility complaint/feedback” checkbox.

Try to provide a detailed description of events, and as much of the following information as possible:

- Date and time of incident.
- Specific location.
- Vehicle number.
- Employee badge number.
- Employee description.

To contact MBTA Customer Support:

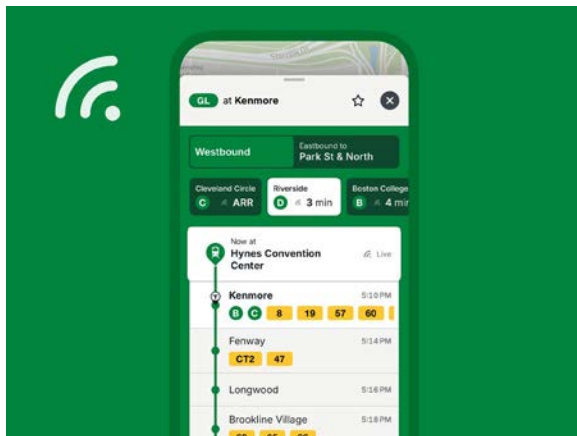
**Visit:** [mbta.com/customer-support](https://mbta.com/customer-support)

**Call:** 617-222-3200 / Toll-free 1-800-392-6100

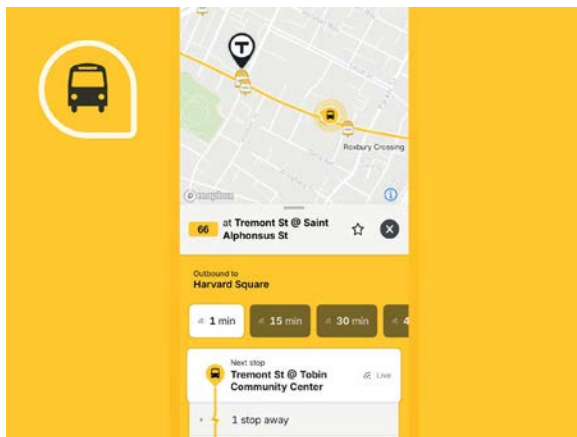
711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers

Representatives available Mon–Fri 6:30AM to 8PM

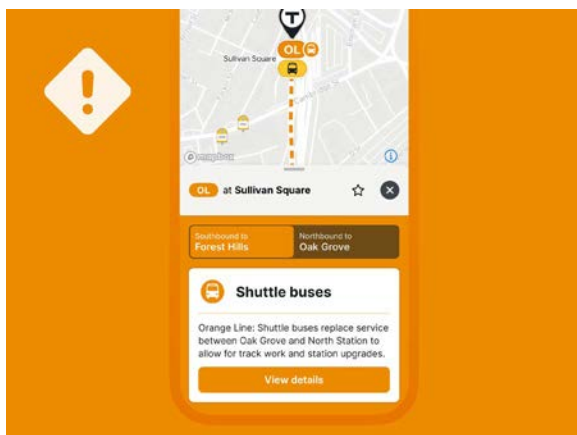
# Stay on the Move with MBTA Go



MBTA Go is the official mobile app for live information about MBTA services. Use it to find arrival times, track buses and trains, check the status of an elevator, and more.



The MBTA Go app was built with accessibility in mind. It includes support for popular accessibility features like VoiceOver, Switch, and Voice Control on iOS and TalkBack, Switch Access, and Voice Access on Android.



You can download the MBTA Go app now from the App Store or Google Play.

Or visit [mbta.com/goapp](https://mbta.com/goapp) to learn more.





# Access in Motion—Online

Stay on top of what's hot in MBTA access! Visit us on the web at [mbta.com/accessibility](http://mbta.com/accessibility), where you'll find:

- Access Guides that take you step by step through accessible journeys on bus, subway, Commuter Rail, and ferry.
- Frequently Asked Questions about accessibility at the MBTA.
- News and updates from the MBTA Department of System-Wide Accessibility, from station upgrades to innovative technology designed to make your trip easier.
- Information on upcoming public meetings and events.
- A virtual history of rider advocacy and access at the T.
- All the ways for you to get involved in MBTA access, and more!





# Materials in Alternate Formats & Languages

The MBTA will make materials such as fixed-route schedules and public meeting documents available in alternate formats upon request. Copies of this brochure may also be requested in alternate formats, as well as in additional languages.

Contact Customer Support at 617-222-3200 / Toll-free 1-800-392-6100, 711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers; or visit [mbta.com/customer-support](https://www.mbta.com/customer-support).

# Your Keys to Access in Motion

## **Complaints, comments, questions, trip planning:**

MBTA Customer Support

**Visit:** [mbta.com/customer-support](https://mbta.com/customer-support)

**Call:** 617-222-3200, Toll-free 1-800-392-6100  
711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers

## **Reduced fares, card replacement, adding RIDE account funds:**

Charlie Service Center

**Visit:** [mbta.com/charlieservicecenter](https://mbta.com/charlieservicecenter)

**Stop by in**

**person:** 296 Washington Street (next to State Street Station)

## **Free travel training, RIDE eligibility, general support:**

MBTA Mobility Center

**Visit:** [mbta.com/mobilitycenter](https://mbta.com/mobilitycenter)

**Call:** 617-337-2727

**Email:** [howtotravel@mbta.com](mailto:howtotravel@mbta.com)

## **Access-related service alerts:**

Elevator/Escalator Update Line

**Call:** 617-222-2828

**Visit:** [mbta.com/alerts/access](https://mbta.com/alerts/access)



## **Accessible arrivals, vehicle tracking, elevator info on mobile:**

MBTA Go App

**Visit:** [mbta.com/goapp](https://mbta.com/goapp)

## **Accessible services info online:**

**Visit:** [mbta.com/accessibility](https://mbta.com/accessibility)

**Follow:** Official MBTA account on social media, hashtag  
#TAccess

## **Rider engagement:**

Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG)

**Visit:** [mbta.com/rtag](https://mbta.com/rtag)

**Email:** [rtagboston@bostoncil.org](mailto:rtagboston@bostoncil.org)

Note: For any phone number above, dial 711 for TTY callers or  
VRS for ASL callers.

## **MBTA Customer Support**

**Visit:** [mbta.com/customer-support](https://mbta.com/customer-support)

**Call:** 617-222-3200, Toll-free 1-800-392-6100  
711 for TTY callers or VRS for ASL callers

## **Accessible services info online:**

**Visit:** [mbta.com/accessibility](https://mbta.com/accessibility)