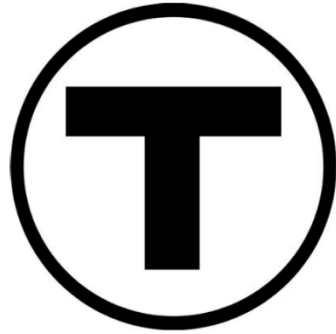




**Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority**

2026 Fall Fare Pilots

David Churella, Senior Director of Fare Policy & Analytics

September 24, 2026

Summer 2026 Commuter Rail Fare Promotions

Summer Commuter Rail Promotions originally planned to run June through August

1. Free Summer Fridays*
 - Commuter Rail service free on all thirteen Fridays in June, July, and August
2. **50% Discount on Commuter Rail Monthly Passes – EXTENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER**
 - Summer calendar month passes (June, July, and August) for CR Zones 1-10, CR Interzones 1-10, and Commuter Ferry discounted by 50 percent
 - Does not apply to Zone 1A or any non-calendar month Commuter Rail products
3. Expanded Weekend Zone Validity for Monthly Passholders*
 - Calendar month Commuter Rail passes cover travel up to the maximum zone / interzone on summer weekends
 - Zone 1-10 passes cover travel through Zone 10; Interzone 1-10 passes cover travel through Interzone 10
 - Does not apply to Zone 1A passes. Expanded zone validity also does not apply to ferry service.
4. **\$1 “Summer Companion” Fares* – EXTENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER**
 - Calendar month CR passholders can bring one companion with them on any CR trip their pass covers for \$1 each way.
 - Does not apply to ferry.

*Promotions do not apply to CapeFLYER, “Boston Stadium” trains, or any other Special Event trains to Foxboro

See more at [mbta.com/CRSummer](https://www.mbta.com/CRSummer)



2026 Fall Fare Pilots

- MBTA has proposed additional 2026 Fare Pilots for Fall 2026
 1. “Unlimited” 2-Hour Transfer Window *
 2. Elimination of Express Bus price point *
 3. “Car-Free Seniors”
- Per FTA Regulations, all Fare Pilots are *fare decreases* that may last *up to 6 months*

Policy Change	Mode	MBTA Fare Policy Objectives			
		Ridership	Revenue	Equity	Simplicity
“Unlimited” 2-Hour Transfer Window	  	Positive	-\$7.8 m (annual)	Increasing	Increasing
Elimination of Express Bus price point		Positive	-\$1.3 m (annual)	TBD / Neutral	Increasing
Car-Free Seniors	   	Positive	-TBD Minimal	Increasing	Neutral

- MBTA will re-evaluate all Fare Pilots this coming winter, taking into account the popularity and affordability of these pilot offerings

See more at [mbta.com/FallFarePilots](https://www.mbta.com/FallFarePilots)

* Policy change recommended by MBTA Fare Policy Study



“Unlimited” 2-Hour Transfer Window

Pilot Live as of September 1st

- MBTA riders make “journeys” that often include multiple “legs” connected by “transfers”
- MBTA transfer policy generally allows for three-leg bus and subway journeys, but there are exceptions to that general rule and further exceptions to those exceptions
- “Unlimited” 2-hour transfer window *significantly simplifies our transfer policy*, allowing *more transfers without restriction*
 - Pay only the fare for the highest-priced “leg” of any “journey” (across bus and subway) within two hours
 - Change will *also allow transfers to and from ferry* on the new “Charlie” Tap to Ride system
 - Additional *transfers to and from Fairmount Line* allowed with CharlieCards and CharlieTickets
- Expanded transfer rules will also *facilitate increased fare collection during rail diversions* for system maintenance



“Unlimited” 2-Hour Transfer Window

Example use cases:

1. “Round Trip”



Take the bus or subway to run an errand, then return home on subway or the same bus route

2. “Pit Stop”



Stop along a subway trip (e.g., to drop a child off at daycare) and then get back on the subway

3. “Unintentional Exit”



Unintentionally leave “fare control” and then tap to return. This often occurs during *rail diversions*.

4. “Walking Transfer”



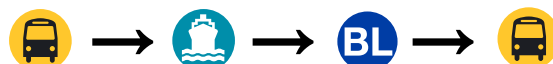
Transfer between two stations more directly on foot

5. “Wrong Way”



Change directions at stations where one-way platforms are not connected “behind the gates”

6. “Chained Trips”



Make multi-stop journeys of more than three individual legs



Elimination of Express Bus Price Point

Pilot Live as of September 1st

- The MBTA generally runs:
 - *~145 bus routes charge “Local Bus” fares*
(\$1.70 full fare / \$0.85 Reduced)
 - *7 bus routes charge “Express Bus” fares*
(\$4.25 full fare / \$2.10 Reduced)
- Some Express Bus routes also charge Local Bus fares for a *subset of origin-destination pairs*
 - Mixed bus fares are *especially difficult to implement in future fare collection system*
- Express versus Local distinction causes confusion for riders, complications for our Tariff, and limitations for service planning
- Pilot *eliminates the higher premium price point for Express Bus route segments*
 - Consolidate all “yellow” bus fares at the same price points
- Pilot does not affect the routes themselves, only the fares charged



Elimination of Express Bus Price Point

Current “Express Bus” routes:

- **300s**
 - **354:** State Street ↔ North Burlington *
- **400s**
 - **426:** Haymarket or Wonderland ↔ Central Square, Lynn *
 - **428:** Haymarket or Wonderland ↔ Oaklandvale
 - **450:** Haymarket or Wonderland ↔ Salem Depot *
- **500s**
 - **501:** Federal & Franklin Street ↔ Brighton Center
 - **504:** Federal & Franklin Street ↔ Watertown Yard
 - **505:** Federal & Franklin Street ↔ Waltham Center

* Starred routes (354, 426, and 450) include Local Bus segments as well as Express Bus segments

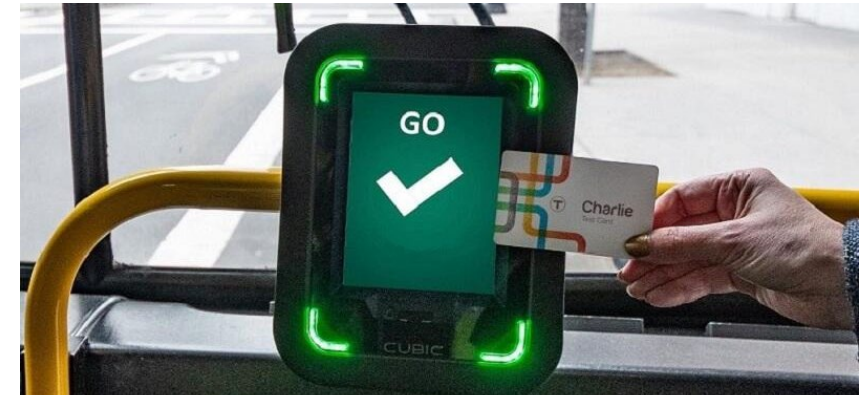
These routes now charge Local Bus fares on a pilot basis with the elimination of the Express Bus price point



Car-Free Seniors

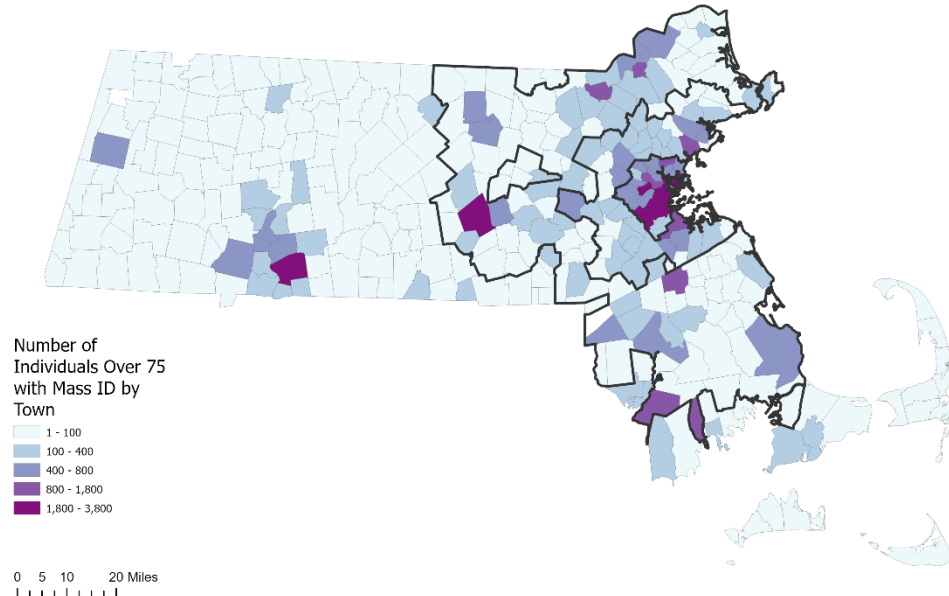
Pilot to Launch October 13th

- Novel program to provide *fare-free credential for all MBTA fixed route services* to older adults who *no longer drive*
 - Designed to make transportation more accessible for older adults with limited transportation options
- Open to all *Massachusetts residents aged 75 and above* who hold a Mass ID and *do not hold a driver's license*
- Joint-effort with *Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV)*
 - “Another tool in the toolbox” for families with aging loved ones
- Program design and implementation leverages and expands back-end database connections established between the MBTA and the RMV for other Reduced Fare programs



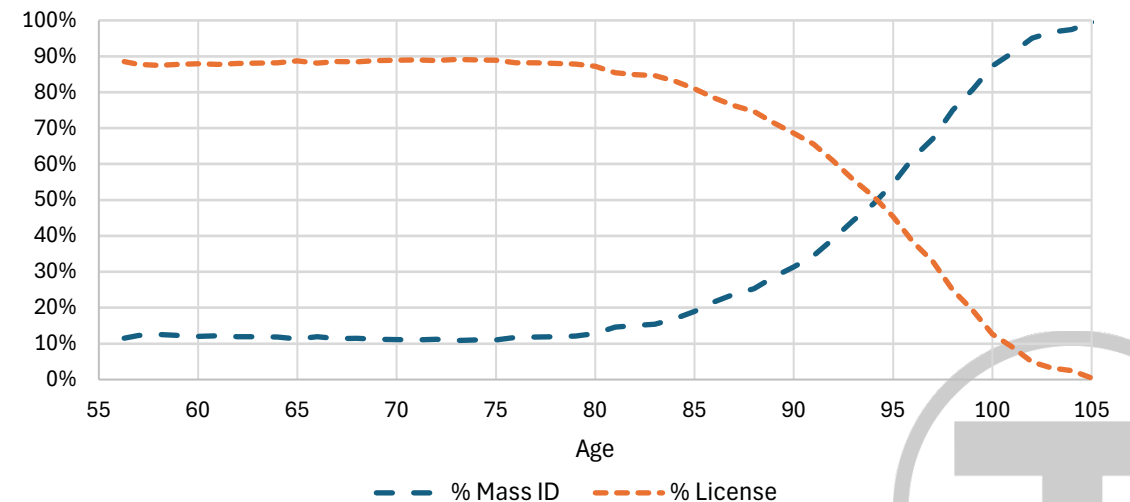
Car-Free Seniors

- Approximately **72 thousand** Massachusetts residents age 75+ hold a Mass ID instead of a driver's license
 - 12 K** live in “14 cities and towns” of the MBTA's inner core service area
 - 13 K** live in “51 cities and towns” of the MBTA's outer core service area
 - 22 K** live in other MBTA “served communities”
 - 24 K** live outside of the MBTA service area



- Overall, Massachusetts residents age 75 or older are split approximately 81% to 19% between driver's licenses and Mass IDs
- Share of Mass IDs (versus driver's licenses) begins to ramp up beyond age 75
 - Mass ID share exceeds license share at age 94

Massachusetts RMV Credential Shares, by Age
Mass IDs vs Driver's Licenses



Car-Free Seniors

- Car-Free Seniors Pilot program to launch **October 13th**
- Application process will be very similar to that of other MBTA Reduced Fares programs:
 1. Online applications can be submitted through MBTA MyCharlie portal
 2. In-person application support available at Charlie Service Center
- MBTA and RMV collaborating on advertising, communications, and community outreach efforts
- MBTA and RMV working with various partner organizations to potentially expand future network of in-person support locations

Senior Programs

Step 1 of 2

Verify Your ID

Enter your Massachusetts Driver's License, Mass ID, Learner's Permit, or Liquor ID card number.



ID Number *Required

Please make sure that the name and date of birth you provide in the following fields matches what appears on your ID.

First Name *Required

Last Name *Required

Date of Birth *Required

Month (MM) Day (DD) Year (YYYY)

MM DD YYYY

By clicking Next, I give permission to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") to share my personal information provided in this application with the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles ("RMV") to verify my identity and store any information obtained. By clicking Next, I give permission to the RMV to share my image, disability placard information, and/or other information sufficient to verify my identity or eligibility, as applicable.

Next

Back

What's Next?

