

## **MRC TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE: The RIDE**

### **The MBTA RIDE Program**

Individuals with disabilities who may require reasonable accommodations with public transportation due to difficulty with walking, vision or hearing, using stairs or escalators, or riding in a standard transit vehicle can receive MBTA door-to-door paratransit services upon eligibility. The RIDE is a first-come, first-serve service with no restrictions on trip purpose. RIDE vehicles are equipped to carry both ambulatory persons and wheelchair users. RIDE drivers can help a passenger up or down from curbside to the vehicle and/or up or down one additional step. An escort or PCA can accompany passengers on The RIDE. The local one-way fare for each registered passenger and each guest is currently \$3.00 and \$5.00 for same day or premium areas.

#### **The MBTA RIDE In-Person Eligibility Process**

- ❖ A scheduled interview is required to determine RIDE eligibility.
- ❖ Free transportation can be arranged to and from the interview by the RIDE Eligibility Center.
- ❖ Determinations will be made within 21 days of the interview and applicants will be notified by mail.
- ❖ Medical verification is not required at time of interview.
- ❖ Applicants should bring their medical provider's contact information (name, phone, and fax) and any available information on any specific functional limitations they may have.
- ❖ If medical verification is needed, Mobility Coordinators will contact applicant's health care providers.
- ❖ RIDE Immediate Service for Medical Necessity provides 30 days of full service to individuals when requested by hospitals, doctors, dialysis or cancer centers, rehabilitation facilities, etc.
- ❖ The RIDE eligibility process determines your eligibility for paratransit services NATION-WIDE.

#### **Pre-Interview**

- ❖ The applicant calls for an appointment or submits an application.
- ❖ An interview appointment is scheduled.
- ❖ The need for any translation services is determined.
- ❖ Free transportation from The RIDE is arranged and free parking is available for people using their car.

#### **Interview**

- ❖ The applicant fills out an application and signs a medical information release form.
- ❖ A private interview is conducted with a Mobility Coordinator.
- ❖ Much of the test is verbal. It is important that you make sure to relay all your needs & barriers regarding transportation access to the interviewer during your interview.
- ❖ You may have a family member, friend, advocate, or counselor present with you at the interview.
- ❖ The in-person interview can take up to 45 minutes or longer.
- ❖ A mobility assessment involving standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs and balancing is conducted to determine your functional ability to use fixed route transit systems.

- ❖ If necessary, Mobility Coordinators will contact the applicant's health care provider for information regarding their functional ability to use public transit.
- ❖ Written notification of eligibility determination will be sent to the applicant within 21 business days.
- ❖ Letters to applicants who receive a determination of Conditional, Temporary or Not Eligible will contain instructions and forms for appealing the decision.

### **Who will conduct the Interviews?**

Mobility Coordinators, who have been trained to evaluate functional transit skills, will conduct the interview. They may also administer functional transit skills tests designed to measure balance, gait, endurance and other necessary skills. This process could take up to 60 minutes (based on applicant feedback).

### **Verification of Psychiatric or Vision Conditions**

Applicants with psychiatric or vision disabilities will need to provide medical verification of their disability, including an explanation of how it prevents their ability to access and/or navigate a fixed route transit system. Mobility Coordinators can contact health care providers on behalf of applicants to obtain this information. You may bring any relevant information with you regarding needs or barriers relating to public transportation.

### **Types of Eligibility**

Unconditional, Conditional, Temporary (less than 12 months), Not Eligible, or Immediate Service for Medical Necessity (30 days of unconditional eligibility during which an interview is scheduled).

### **Non- Eligibility**

A determination of NOT ELIGIBLE indicates a higher level of functional transit skill ability than unconditional or conditional eligibility. A NOT ELIGIBLE determination requires ALL of the following:

- ❖ An in-person interview;
- ❖ A demonstrated ability to complete all transit skills functional assessments successfully; and
- ❖ The applicant's health care provider indicates the applicant has no needs or barriers preventing their use of public transit.

### **Contact Information**

**The RIDE Eligibility Center**

**General Phone:** 617-337-2727

**Fare and Reservations Info:** 617-222-5123

**Address:** Hood Business Park  
500 Rutherford Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Charlestown, MA 02129

Email: [theride@mbta.com](mailto:theride@mbta.com)

For more information please visit the MBTA RIDE web page:

[http://www.mbta.com/riding\\_the\\_t/accessible\\_services/default.asp?id=7108](http://www.mbta.com/riding_the_t/accessible_services/default.asp?id=7108)