



**Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**

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**MCB Virtual Town Hall:  
MBTA Mobility Center  
March 10, 2023**



# Welcome

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**MCB**

MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION  
FOR THE BLIND

MCB Virtual Town Hall:  
MBTA Mobility Center  
Allyson Bull, M.Ed., COMS, TVI  
Kara Peters, M.Ed., COMS



# What is Orientation and Mobility?

## Orientation and Mobility (O&M)

“The ability to move independently, safely, and purposefully through the environment,” (Blasch & Welsh, 1987)

Cover skills including:

- Orientation to the environment
- Non-visual
- Auditory
- Long cane techniques
- Technology/GPS/app training





# MCB Orientation and Mobility Services

- Orientation and Mobility (O&M) services through MCB are provided by Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS)
- MCB provides community O&M services
  - Take place at home, work, and community locations (nursing homes, prisons, colleges, day program settings, etc.)
  - Lessons will be structured differently depending on the consumer's goals and abilities
  - 1:1 service model



# Who is eligible for MCB O&M services?

- Individuals registered with MCB are eligible for O&M community services
  - Students should receive O&M services through their IEP; they become eligible just before graduation
  - Individuals on both the social rehabilitation (SR) and vocational rehabilitation (VR) track
  - DeafBlind Extended Supports (DBES)
  - Adults with legal blindness



# Where does MCB O&M Take Place?

## MCB COMS

### Region 1 (Western MA)

- Mike Dionne

### Region 3 (Northeast)

- Matt Edwards

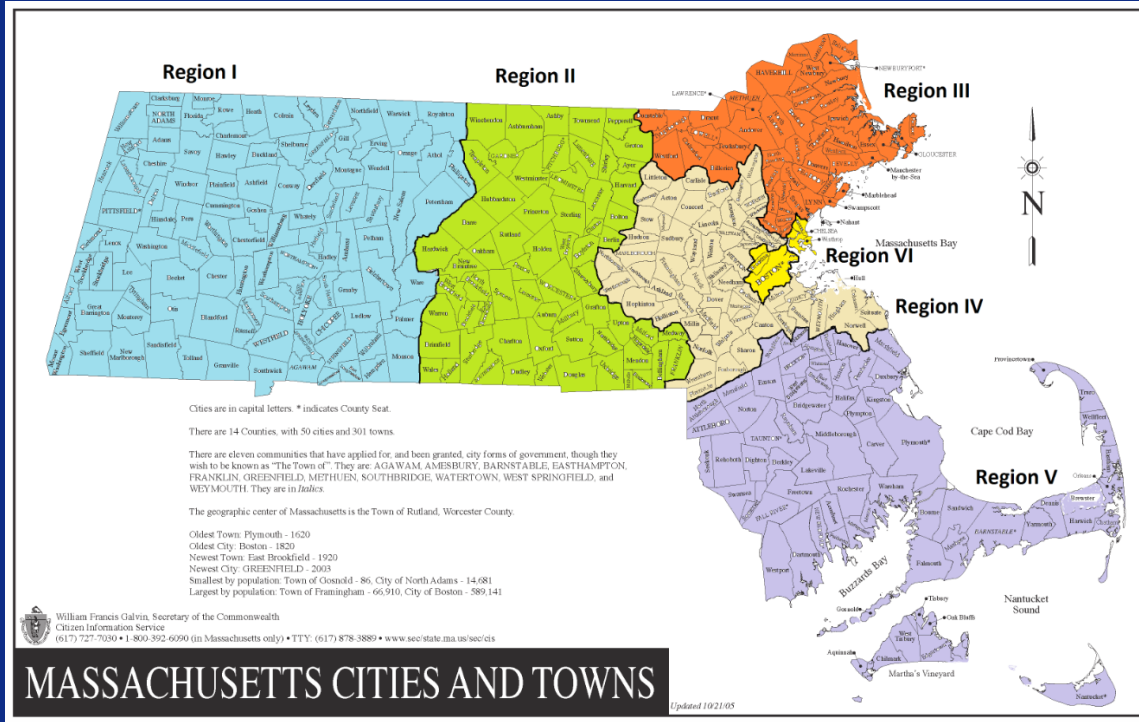
### Region 4 (Metro-west)

- Kara Peters

### Region 5 (Southeast)

- Karin Barrows

MCB also receives supplementary O&M support from our community partners at the Carroll Center for the Blind.







# How to Request O&M with MCB

You can request MCB O&M services by contacting your case manager. If you do not know who your case manager is, you can contact the main MCB line:

- (617) 727-5550
- Toll free: 800-392-6450
- [MCBInfo@mass.gov](mailto:MCBInfo@mass.gov)



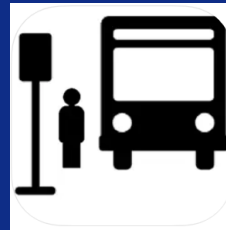
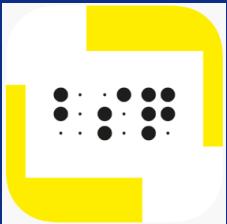


# O&M Apps

The following apps can be helpful for trip planning and navigation:

- BlindSquare
- Apple Maps/Google Maps (with narration/Screen reader)
- Transit (not an official MBTA app)
- All Aboard (MEE)
- Aira
- Be My Eyes
- Lazarillo

These are apps for navigation, will not assist with crossing the street







# CONNECT WITH MCB

**1-800-392-6450**

**600 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111**

**[www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)**

**[MCBinfo@mass.gov](mailto:MCBinfo@mass.gov)**

**Follow us:**

**Twitter: [@massblind](https://twitter.com/massblind)**

**Facebook: [@masscommblind](https://facebook.com/masscommblind)**

**Instagram: [@massblind](https://instagram.com/massblind)**

**LinkedIn: [Massachusetts Commission for the Blind](https://linkedin.com/company/massachusetts-commission-for-the-blind)**



**Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

# MBTA Mobility Center

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MCB Town Hall

03/10/2023

# What is the MBTA Mobility Center?

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The MBTA Mobility Center serves as a "one stop shop" to empower the community on how to navigate the MBTA's extensive accessible public transit services and other community resources while navigating through Boston and the Greater Boston Region



# Mobility Center Services

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## Services include

- 1:1 Individualized Travel Training for people who are 65+ and individuals with a disability
- Group trainings for riders and agency staff in the community
- Transit Access 101 group trainings at the emergency training center
- Trip planning assistance
- Technology training
- Reduced fare application support



# 1:1 Travel Training Process

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- Intake through referral
- Pre-training assessment and goal setting
- Travel training tips
- Trip training at a frequency and time agreed upon by the trainer and trainee
- Monitoring and evaluation of goal achievement



# Who is a Candidate for 1:1 Travel Training?

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**For individualized Travel Training with the MBTA Mobility Center those who are legally blind should meet the following criteria:**

- Must have already completed Orientation & Mobility training
- Able to safely navigate in the community
- Want to learn a route or explore stations within the MBTA bus and subway service area, or zones 1a through 3 on the Commuter Rail
- Self-identify as having a disability or as someone who would benefit from travel training



# Training on The Commuter Rail





# Group Trainings

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## **Transit Access 101**

- One hour classroom instruction at MBTA Emergency Training Center on the basics of using the MBTA system
- Explore an out-of-service Blue Line subway car and Green Line trolley
- Explore and ride an out-of-service MBTA bus and ride the Red Line
- Live demonstration on using fare vending machines and fare gates

## **On-site Group Trainings**

- One hour classroom instruction held at community-based organizations (e.g. senior center)
- Explore an out of service MBTA bus to learn more about bus features



# Trip Planning

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**The Mobility Center's Travel Trainers and Transit Coordinators provide trip planning assistance:**

- Providing guidance to individuals and groups covering tools such as maps, schedules, MBTA trip planning tools, and phone apps
- Exploring alternative modes of transportation, as well (for example: ridesharing, micro-transit, [MassRideMatch.org](https://MassRideMatch.org))



# Tactile Tools



# Technology Training

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## **Mobility Center customers can receive training focused on skill-building in:**

- Using online resources, such as the T-alert tool for service alerts and the MBTA Trip Planner, to understand schedules and navigate the fixed-route and manage their reduced-fare account
- Using mobile apps to order private transportation from taxi companies and ridesharing, such as Uber and Lyft
- Using online tools to accomplish tasks or attend appointments virtually, such as online grocery delivery and telehealth
- Signing up for and/or booking trips on RIDE Flex



# How to Apply for the Blind Access Card

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- Online at [mbta.com/blindaccess/apply](https://mbta.com/blindaccess/apply) Card will be mailed to you
- Your Travel Trainer can help complete the process online or in person at the CharlieCard Store
  - Located at the Downtown Crossing Concourse
  - By appointment on Mondays or walk-in Tuesday-Friday
- Mobility Center staff are trained to assist in completing the online version via phone. A Navigator, who answers the phone, can direct you to where to apply online or in-person. They can help book an appointment for you, if preferred



# Contact the Mobility Center

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**In-person:** 1000 Mass. Ave, Suite 201, Boston, MA 02118  
Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 5PM

**Phone:** 617-337-2727 or 617-337-2756 (711 for Relay)

**Website:** [www.mbta.com/accessibility/mbta-mobility-center](http://www.mbta.com/accessibility/mbta-mobility-center)

**E-mail:** [howtotravel@mbta.com](mailto:howtotravel@mbta.com) or  
[mbtamobilitycenter@mtm-inc.net](mailto:mbtamobilitycenter@mtm-inc.net)

**Facebook:** MBTA Mobility Center





**Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

# Reduced Fare Programs

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Emily Balkam

Sr. Technical Product Manager for Reduced Fares

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)



# Reduced Fare Media



**Senior**  
50% reduced one-way fares  
\$10 7-Day LinkPasses  
\$30 monthly LinkPasses  
Age 65+



**Blind Access**  
Free travel for cardholders  
and a sighted guide



**Transportation Access Pass**  
50% reduced one-way fares  
\$10 7-Day LinkPasses  
\$30 monthly LinkPasses



**Youth Pass**  
50% reduced one-way fares  
\$10 7-Day LinkPasses  
\$30 monthly LinkPasses  
Ages 12-25

# Apply for Reduced Fare Programs

## **In Person for Senior, Blind and TAP:**

- CharlieCard Store: 7 Chauncy St, Boston, MA 02111
- Mobility Center: 1000 Massachusetts Ave, Boston, MA 02118

## **In Person for Youth Pass:**

- Visit [mbta.com/fares/reduced/youth-pass](https://www.mbta.com/fares/reduced/youth-pass) for participating city or towns.

## **On-Line (fully accessible):**

- Senior: [mbta.com/senior/apply](https://www.mbta.com/senior/apply)
- Blind: [mbta.com/blindaccess/apply](https://www.mbta.com/blindaccess/apply)
- TAP: [mbta.com/tap/apply](https://www.mbta.com/tap/apply)
- Youth: [mbta.com/youthpass/apply](https://www.mbta.com/youthpass/apply)

# Selecting a Language

Select a language, and all copy will translate automatically.

Supported languages:

- English
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- Simplified Chinese
- Traditional Chinese

## Apply for a Blind Access CharlieCard

Select a language (required) \*

- ☒ English
- ☐ Español
- ☐ Português
- ☐ 中文简体
- ☐ 中文繁體

# Starting the Application

The instructions will show what documents you will need to upload in the application.

This form can be used for **new, renewal or replacement** card requests.

## Before You Begin

This application is for people who are **legally blind**.

You will need to upload the following items:

1. New applicants will need a **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind ID or Certificate of Blindness**, or out-of-state blindness certification.
2. If you do not have a Massachusetts Commission for the Blind ID, or if you are requesting a renewal or replacement card, you will need a **government-issued photo ID**, such as a passport or state ID. Expired IDs will not be accepted.
3. A recent **color photo of yourself** from the neck up in front of a solid, light-colored background. You cannot wear a hat, face covering, or sunglasses.

## What Would You Like to Do?

Select an option (required) \*

- ☒ Apply for a new Blind Access CharlieCard
- ☐ Renew my current or expired card
- ☐ Replace my missing or damaged card

# Required Personal Information

All required fields must be completed including:

- Date of birth
- First name
- Last name

## Personal Information

**Date of birth (required) \***  
Use the format (MM/DD/YYYY). Use a four-digit year and include forward slashes.

**First name (required) \***

**Last name (required) \***

# Optional Contact Information

Adding an email and phone number are optional.

If you provide an email address, you will receive status updates as your application is processed.

## Contact Information

We will only use your information to contact you about your application. We'll send you email updates with the status of your application.

Phone number (optional)

Email (optional)

# Proof of Blindness

If you have an MCB ID, you can upload it as both proof of blindness and proof of identity.

If you **don't** have an MCB ID, you can upload a MCB or out-of-state blindness certification instead. You will also be asked to upload a photo ID.

### Do You Have a MCB ID?

A Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) ID verifies registration as an individual who is legally blind in Massachusetts.



If you don't have a MCB ID or Certificate of Blindness, or out-of-state blindness certification, you may be eligible for a [Transportation Access Pass \(TAP\) CharlieCard](#).

MASSACHUSETTS Commission for the Blind

123456	04/22/2027	5'10"	M	01/22/1950
MCB Reg	Expires	Height	Sex	Date of Birth

SAMPLE, JAMES  
600 WASHINGTON ST  
BOSTON, MA 02111

SIGNATURE



If you need help applying for a Blind Access CharlieCard, we recommend visiting the [Mobility Center](#) or the [CharlieCard Store](#).

Do you have a MCB ID? (required) \*

☒ Yes


☐ No, I have a MCB Certificate of Blindness or out-of-state blindness certification.

Upload MCB ID (required) \*

.gif, .jpeg, .jpg, .pdf and .png file formats are accepted

Select files...

✓ Done

 Sample MCB ID.png

File(s) uploaded successfully.



# Upload a Photo ID

If you do not have an MCB ID, you are required to upload a photo ID to verify your identity.

- Click on the blue **Select files** button to upload from a desktop or phone
- You only need to upload the front of your card

### Upload Photo ID

Upload a government-issued photo ID, such as a passport, state ID, or Massachusetts Commission for the Blind ID. Expired IDs, photocopies, and edited photos with blurred information will not be accepted.



Upload a photo ID (required) \*

.gif, .jpeg, .jpg, .pdf and .png file formats are accepted

Select files...

✓ Done

 Sample Photo ID.png x

File(s) uploaded successfully.

# Upload a Photo of Yourself

You are required to upload a photo for fraud prevention purposes.

Your picture must be a recent color photo of yourself from the neck up in front of a solid, light-colored background. You cannot wear a hat, face covering, or sunglasses.

## Upload a Photo of Yourself

Upload a recent color photo of yourself from the neck up in front of a solid, light-colored background. You cannot wear a hat, face covering, or sunglasses.

Guidelines:

- Submit a color photo, taken in last 6 months.
- Use a clear image of your face. Do not use filters commonly used on social media.
- Use a solid, light-colored background with no background objects.

### How your photo should look



- ✓ Solid, light background
- ✓ Neck up



- ✓ Religious head coverings accepted



- ✓ Glasses without glare

### Mistakes to avoid



- ✗ Busy background
- ✗ Wearing hat



- ✗ Not from neck up



- ✗ Filter
- ✗ Dark background

Upload a photo of yourself (required) \*  
.gif, .jpeg, .jpg, and .png file formats are accepted

Select files...

# Getting Your Card

You can choose to have your card **mailed** to you, or you can **pick up** your card at the CharlieCard Store.

You will receive email or mailed notifications in your preferred language as your application is processed.

## Getting Your Card

If your application is approved, how would you like to receive your Blind Access CharlieCard? (required) \*

- ☐ Mail to my address
- ☒ Pick up at the CharlieCard Store

The CharlieCard Store is located at Downtown Crossing Station, on the underground concourse between the Red and Orange lines: 7 Chauncy Street, Boston, MA 02111.

For hours and more information about the [CharlieCard Store](#), visit the MBTA website.

# Optional Demographic Information

These questions are optional and are not required to apply.

## Demographic Information

The MBTA collects demographic information to understand more about its riders.

Providing your information is **optional** and does not change your eligibility for a Senior CharlieCard. Any information you choose to share will only be used by MBTA staff for research that will not be linked to your name.

Would you like to share information about your race, ethnicity, gender identity, income, or employment status? (optional)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How do you describe your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply (optional)

- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black/African-American
- ☐ Indigenous American/First Nations
- ☐ Latinx/Hispanic
- ☐ Middle Eastern/North African
- ☐ Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

How do you describe your gender identity? Select all that apply (optional)

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Non-binary/Genderqueer
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

What is your household income? (optional)

- ☐ Less than \$14,500
- ☐ \$14,500 to \$28,999
- ☐ \$29,000 to \$43,499
- ☐ \$43,500 to \$57,999
- ☐ \$58,000 to \$75,999
- ☐ \$76,000 to \$108,499
- ☐ \$108,500 to \$151,999
- ☐ \$152,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your employment status? (optional)

- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Not employed
- ☐ Unable to work
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

# Required Rules and Conditions

You must check off the agreement statement to finish submitting your application.

## Free/Reduced Fares Rules and Conditions

Please read the [Free/Reduced Fares Rules and Conditions](#) . This link opens in a new tab.


☒ I agree to the Free/Reduced Fares Rules and Conditions (required) \*

Submit

# Notifications After Submission

## After Submission:

- On screen confirmation
- If you provided an email address, status notices are sent as application is processed
- If you did not provide an email, printed letters and phone calls will be used when needed

 **Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

## Application Submitted

Thank you for applying for an MBTA Blind Access CharlieCard.

Your application will be reviewed within 6 – 8 weeks. We'll contact you if we're unable to approve your application.

### Questions?

Contact [Customer Support using their online form](#) or call the number below.

Monday – Friday: 6:30 AM – 8 PM  
Saturday – Sunday: 8 AM – 4 PM

**Main Hotline:** [617-222-3200](tel:617-222-3200)  
**Toll Free:** [800-392-6100](tel:800-392-6100)  
**TTY:** [617-222-5146](tel:617-222-5146)

### Tell us about your experience

Take our two-minute survey. Your feedback helps us improve the Blind Access CharlieCard application process.

[Take our survey](#)