

## **Massachusetts Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Application Form**

The purpose of this application is to determine eligibility for complementary ADA Paratransit service. If you have a disability that prevents you from using the fixed route bus service in Massachusetts, you may be eligible for ADA Paratransit service. ADA Paratransit is a shared ride, advanced reservation, origin-to-destination service for persons with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route bus service because of their disability.

**ADA Level Service Criteria:** The Massachusetts' Regional Transit Authorities ADA Paratransit programs are each designed, **at a minimum**, to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act service criteria established by the federal government. Service is provided only to individuals found eligible by the Regional Transit Authority and is operated under the following ADA guidelines:

- Complementary service is only provided in areas where fixed route buses operate. This does not include Express Commuter service, Intercity or Dial-A-Ride services. A trip is only considered ADA Paratransit when both the pick-up and drop-off are located within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed route bus route.
- Service is provided only during the hours and days when fixed route bus service in that area operates.
- Rides must be reserved at least by the day before the trip during normal business hours for the RTA.
- ADA Paratransit fares will vary throughout the Commonwealth but are typically no more than double the cost of a full fare on a fixed route bus.
- Service is not restricted by trip purpose but provided for all types of trips.

**ADA Definition of Disability:** Any person with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or cognitive impairment, and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift), to board, ride, or disembark from any fixed route bus.

Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents them from traveling to or from a bus stop on the fixed route bus system. Architectural and environmental barriers such as distance, terrain, or weather; do not form a basis for eligibility alone. However, a person may be eligible if the interaction of the disability and environmental barriers prevent the person from traveling to or from the fixed route bus stop.

**Eligibility:** There are three types of eligibility:

***Unconditional Eligibility*** - Your disability or health condition always prevents you from using fixed route buses and you qualify for ADA Paratransit service for all your trips.

***Conditional Eligibility*** - You are able to use the fixed route bus for some of your trips and qualify for ADA Paratransit service for other trips when your disability or environmental barriers prevent the use of fixed route bus service.

***Temporary Eligibility*** - You have a health condition or disability that temporarily prevents you from using the fixed route bus.

**Application Process:** ADA Paratransit service is provided for customers whose disability or health condition may prevent them from using fixed route bus services for some or all their travel. Individuals who are interested in using ADA Paratransit service must apply and be found eligible according to ADA guidelines. Each Regional Transit Authority will determine an individual's functional abilities and limitations for using fixed route buses within their region.

1. Fill out Paratransit Application Form entirely
2. Attach any certifications pertaining to your disability: Certificate of Blind, Disability Verification from Veterans Organization or Medicare
3. Have Professional Verification Form filled out by your healthcare provider
4. Submit all forms to each Regional Transit Authority that you wish to have eligibility to ride ADA Paratransit Services (a list with contact information is included as Attachment A of this application). ADA federal law allows for 21-day visitor status for approved individuals to travel with other providers, however if you plan to travel frequently in other regions, please send this form to that Regional Transit Authority for their approval.
5. Once all paperwork has been received a decision will be made on your application within 21 days. If a decision is not made within 21 days, temporary eligibility for ADA Paratransit service will be provided until a final decision is made. You will be notified of your eligibility by letter. If you are determined to be eligible for ADA Paratransit for some or all your trips, you will receive a Certification Letter and a Customer Guide with information about how to use the service.

**Appeal Process:** If you are determined to be able to use fixed route buses for some or all your trips, you will be notified of the exact reason(s) for this decision and told how you may appeal the decision. You can appeal any eligibility decision made by the regional service provider that limits your ability to use ADA Paratransit service. For example:

- You were found "Not Eligible" for ADA Paratransit
- You were found "Conditionally Eligible" and disagree with the eligibility categories you were given, or you think the conditional status is wrong.

All requests for an appeal must be submitted in writing no later than sixty (60) days of receipt of determination. Appeals should be mailed to the Regional Transit Authority who made the determination.

If you have any questions about the application process, contact the Regional Transit Authority in your area.