



# **Regional Transportation Program, INC.**

## **ADA Complimentary Paratransit**

### **Policies and Procedures**

**January 2023**

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# Introduction

## About This Guide

The guide is a response to a call from the community of riders, agencies, advocates and funders with whom RTP has an important relationship. Over several year's time, those who know and use our services have frequently asked us if it were possible to develop and implement a "Rider's Guide" that contained all the essential information, policies and procedures a person should have to use RTP ADA services effectively and efficiently. This guide is our response to that call.

This Guide will be a "living" document which will change over time to reflect future operating realities. The collective wisdom of our transportation friends will help us immensely to always keep the Rider's Guide fresh, factual and focused on our mission in the years to come.

Under the auspices of the RTP ADAPT advisory committee, and with substantial encouragement from the Quality Assurance Council of Region 5 of the Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services, RTP convened a conference in May 2002.

The purpose of the conference was to obtain feedback about the initial draft of the guide from potential users - riders, advocates, agencies, funders and other transportation providers. The response was extremely gratifying as more than sixty people attended the all day session. Extensive comments were generated from the attendees about how to improve the draft, both its content and format, to make it a useful tool for all to use. These comments were recorded by the conference facilitator, organized into broad themes and presented to RTP. Many of the comments and themes form a large part of the foundation upon which this final document is based.

The board and staff of RTP sincerely thank all those individuals and agencies that assisted RTP in developing this guide. The policies, procedures, rules and regulations contained in the guide form the basis upon which RTP will provide services to all its constituents.

## **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM, INC.**

### **Mission**

The mission of Regional Transportation Program, Inc. is to meet the diverse transportation and mobility needs of people and communities.

### **Agency**

Regional Transportation, established in 1976, is a private, non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization. A governing Board of Directors implements its fiduciary responsibilities by ensuring fealty to the agency's mission, establishing agency policies, and approving the agency's annual operating and capital budgets.

RTP provides "mass transit" public transportation in Cumberland County. Its services are open to the general public. A fare policy and rates has been established for general public riders.

RTP has been designated by the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) as a "Transportation Corporation" for the purpose of serving rural municipalities. RTP provides the ADA complementary paratransit service under a contract with the cities of Portland, South Portland and Westbrook. RTP also offers publicly funded transportation service throughout Cumberland County. With lift equipped vehicles, full and part-time drivers and volunteer drivers, RTP delivers not only the ADA Paratransit service, but also a number of other public transportation programs. The agency has a countywide bus service, a provider for the broker to provide non-emergency MaineCare trips, a food shopping service, employment transportation, transportation for seniors and transportation for riders of state and local human service agencies. RTP delivers more than 500 curb to curb trips each day.

RTP services are funded in part by the state Department of Human Services, Maine Department of Transportation, the US DOT Federal Transit Administration, the United Way of Greater Portland, Logisticare (for MaineCare transportation), and many municipalities in Cumberland County.

## **American With Disabilities Act**

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. As a major piece of civil rights legislation, the ADA protects all peoples' rights without regard to their physical and /or cognitive disabilities.

The ADA specifies that all people have a right to be able to use available public transportation. The ADA requires that individuals not able to independently ride public buses be provided with an equivalent, complementary, service for their transportation needs.

## ADA Paratransit

This complementary service is called ADA Paratransit. ADA Paratransit is provided to persons who, because of their disabilities, are unable to independently ride a bus, get on or off a bus, or get to or from a bus stop. ADA Paratransit must be provided within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of the service area and during the same service hours as fixed route bus service. The maximum fare a public transportation provider may charge for standard ADA Paratransit service is twice the adult one-way bus fare.

## ADAPT

RTP's ADA Complementary Paratransit Service is named ADAPT (Americans with Disabilities Act ParaTransit). The agency provides this service in compliance with the ADA rules and regulations. The communities of Portland, South Portland and Westbrook subsidize the service. Under RTP's ADAPT service, RTP is directly responsible for:

- Certifying eligible paratransit riders
- Scheduling rides
- Providing customer service
- Reporting service and financial information to funding sources
- Collecting fares from riders

## Eligibility for ADAPT

RTP provides ADA Paratransit service to persons whose temporary or permanent disabilities *prevent* their independent use of public transportation. To determine eligibility for paratransit service, individuals must complete an Application for ADA Complementary Paratransit Service and document, that because of their disability, they are unable to use the fixed route bus systems for one (or more) of the following three reasons:

- Unable to independently ride a bus. □ Unable to get on or off a bus.
- Unable to get to or from a bus stop.

## Application for ADAPT

Applications for ADA paratransit service are available through RTP. RTP personnel are available to assist with the application process and answer questions regarding eligibility Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Please call toll free 1-800-244-0704 or 774-2666. Applications are also available on our website at [www.rtprides.org](http://www.rtprides.org).

The need to travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is established during the application process. A PCA is someone whose service or presence is *required* by a certified passenger to meet his or her personal needs or to assist with travel. For more information on traveling with a Personal Care Attendant refer to page 22.

RTP may take up to 21 days to process a completed application. Approved applicants will receive a letter certifying eligibility, an ADA Paratransit Service green identification card, and a copy of the RTP Rider's Guide.

## **ADAPT Application Process**

Upon request, RTP will send the applicant an ADAPT application form or the applicant can download the application from our website ([www.rtprides.org](http://www.rtprides.org)).

Once RTP receives the completed application, RTP examines the applicant's responses to see how the physical and/or mental disability prevents the applicant from using the fixed route service (METRO or SPBS). The reason(s) that prevents the rider from using the fixed route service must be related to the stated disability.

Since RTP does not know the physical conditions related to accessing each and every METRO or SPBS stop, the agency considers any mobility aids the applicant uses to help determine if there may be barriers that prevent the applicant from using the public service. In addition, the applicant must respond to several other questions related to their ability to access and depart from the public stops and from their point of origin.

The applicant's medical provider must provide a specific diagnosis including whether the condition is temporary or permanent and state how the disability prevents the rider from using the public service. There is space on the application form for the medical provider to provide additional information concerning the applicant's disability.

If there are any questions related to the answers provided by the applicant or medical provider, RTP will attempt to contact the applicant for additional clarification. All attempts at contact will be noted and attached with the application. Failure to speak with RTP staff and provide additional information/clarification may result in a returned or denied application.

Once RTP has all of the information required, a determination is made as to whether the applicant qualifies for ADA, and for what length of time. The normal period for ADA eligibility is three years. Shorter periods may be approved if the condition is temporary. The Executive Director makes a final review of the application and staff determination of eligibility. A written determination is sent to the applicant with 21 days of receiving the application.

## **Recertification Process**

It is required that all ADA paratransit riders submit an application for recertification every three years or whenever certification expires (i.e. temporary disability.)

At the appropriate time, RTP ADA riders will be sent recertification materials to verify continuing eligibility. The packet provides detailed instructions on the recertification process.

## **Visitor Paratransit Service**

Paratransit service may be provided to ADA eligible persons who are not currently certified within the Greater Portland area. All visitors are required to provide a minimum amount of information to RTP to determine eligibility to utilize paratransit service. Visitors must provide the following:

- Proof of address and documentation of a transportation disability (if not readily apparent).
- The complete address of where residing while visiting in the Greater Portland area.

Within one business day of receipt of all required information, RTP will provide the visitor with a written notification of eligibility (or rejection). Written notification shall be in the form of email to the visitor. If a visitor does not have access to email, the written notice shall be a letter sent by the US Postal Service. All visitors are called on the phone to inform them of their eligibility (or rejection) as well.

Visitors are eligible for service for any combination of 21 days during any 365-day period beginning with the visitor's first use of the service. A letter will be issued to the visitor containing a visitor ID number and information regarding the limitations of their eligibility and service provision.

Information on how to become eligible for paratransit service in the Greater Portland area is also included in the letter.

Visitors returning to the region whose visitor eligibility has expired must reapply for visitor eligibility. Those planning to return to the region within the year, frequently visit the region, or stay in the region over 21 days are encouraged to submit an application for RTP paratransit services.

## **Paratransit Ride Fares**

- The standard ADA Paratransit ride fare is \$2.50 per one-way trip and is subject to change as determined by the fares of the two fixed route systems and RTP Board of Directors.
- ADA riders may travel with a Personal Care Attendant at no charge.
- The fare for a companion is \$2.50 for regular paratransit service.
- Riders may travel with a Service Animal at no additional charge. Please inform Dispatch when traveling with a Service Animal.

## **Mobility Devices**

Riders may use wheelchairs, canes, walkers and other mobility devices on paratransit service.

RTP follows the Federal Statute for ADA Wheelchair Transportation as Titled:

Title 49 CFR 37.165 – Lift and securement Use

All wheelchairs and their users shall be transported in the RTP's accessible vehicles. RTP is not required to permit wheelchairs to ride in places other than designated securement locations in the vehicle, where such locations exist. RTP requires that for individuals being transporting and individuals who use wheelchairs, RTP shall provide and use a securement system to ensure that the wheelchair remains within the securement area.

- RTP requires that an individual permit his or her wheelchair to be secured. RTP may deny a ride to a rider who refuses his or her wheelchair to be secured.
- RTP may not deny transportation to a wheelchair or its user on the ground that the device cannot be secured or restrained satisfactorily by the vehicle's securement system.
- RTP may recommend to a user of a wheelchair that the individual transfer to a vehicle seat. The entity may not require the individual to transfer.
- Where necessary or upon request, RTP's personnel shall assist individuals with disabilities with the use of securement systems, ramps and lifts. If it is necessary for the personnel to leave their seats to provide this assistance, they shall do so.
- RTP shall permit individuals with disabilities who do not use wheelchairs, including standees, to use a vehicle's lift or ramp to enter the vehicle. Provided, that RTP is not required to permit such individuals to use a lift Model 141 manufactured by EEC, Inc. If RTP chooses not to allow such individuals to use such a lift, it shall clearly notify consumers of this fact by signage on the exterior of the vehicle (adjacent to and of equivalent size with the accessibility symbol).

In accordance with updates effective Oct. 19, 2011, for the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 37.165 - Lift and securement use.

Except as provided in this section, individuals using wheelchairs shall be transported in RTP's vehicles.

- With respect to wheelchair/occupant combinations that are larger or heavier than those to which the design standards for vehicles and equipment of 49 CFR part 38 refer, the entity must carry the wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can accommodate the wheelchair and occupant. The entity may decline to carry a wheelchair/occupant if the combined weight exceeds that of the lift specifications or if carriage of the wheelchair is demonstrated to be inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements.
- The entity is not required to permit wheelchairs to ride in places other than designated securement locations in the vehicle, where such locations exist.

## **Rider Safety**

- Riders using 3 wheel scooters are strongly encouraged to transfer out of their scooter into the seat of the paratransit vehicle whenever possible. Scooters cannot always be adequately secured and may present a significant safety hazard to the occupant, the driver and other riders if individuals are transported seated in the device.
- Riders who are transferable are able to move from his or her mobility device to the seat of the vehicle, and back with a minimum of assistance. A minimum of assistance is defined as a driver extending an arm or stabilizing the mobility device while the rider moves in and out of the device. Drivers are prohibited from lifting or carrying riders.
- Drivers will provide assistance up reasonable inclines or over minor obstructions. However, drivers cannot assist riders in wheelchairs up or down steps or over obstacles that require the driver to lift the wheelchair.

## **Miscellaneous Medical Equipment**

Riders may travel with oxygen tanks when using paratransit service. For safety reasons, oxygen tanks must be secured to prevent the tank from falling, striking another object, or becoming dislodged.

## **Service Animals**

- Service animals may travel on paratransit vehicles to provide assistance to individuals with disabilities.
- Service Animals must remain under full control of the owner at all times. If a Service Animal misbehaves (such as soiling the vehicle or continued repeated growling at or harassing riders, the driver or other Service Animals), the rider and the Service Animal will be returned to the rider's residence. The driver will report the Service Animal's behavior to RTP and RTP will attempt to contact the rider to determine the steps necessary to prevent future occurrences.
- Service Animals should generally remain in a down or sit position. Service Animals may not block the aisle of the vehicle.
- Owners of Service Animals shall inform RTP when scheduling a paratransit trip that a Service Animal will accompany them sufficiently prepared for the transportation. When scheduling the trip, the dispatcher will ensure that there is space for Service Animals on paratransit vehicles.

## **Personal Care Attendant**

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone whose services or presence is required by the rider with a disability to meet his or her personal needs or to assist in traveling.



If a rider has a documented need for a PCA they may travel with one PCA on each scheduled trip. The need for a Personal Care Attendant is documented when the application for paratransit service is submitted and reviewed by RTP.

Riders should inform the dispatcher when they will be traveling with a PCA. The dispatcher will also ask the rider if they will be traveling alone. There is no cost for a PCA to travel with an RTP rider. The PCA must have the same pick-up and drop-off location as the rider.

**NOTE:** Contact RTP if the application for paratransit service has already been processed, and it is later determined that the rider must travel with a PCA. In addition, if the rider no longer has a need to travel with a PCA, please notify RTP immediately.

## **Companions**

A *Companion* is a friend, relative or other person, who accompanies a rider on a trip.

Companions must pay \$2.50 per one-way ride. Riders should inform the Dispatcher when they will be traveling with a companion. The Dispatcher will also ask the rider if they will be traveling alone. The companion must have the same pick-up and drop-off location as the rider.

## **Appeals Process for a Denied Application**

For persons who's Application for ADA Paratransit Service is denied, RTP has developed an appeals process as required by the ADA. *Applicants have up to 60 days from the date of the written denial to appeal.* For additional information regarding RTP's appeal process, refer to Appendix A

## RTP CUSTOMER SERVICE

The goal of RTP is rider satisfaction.

### Service Expectation

Riders should expect the following services from RTP, Inc.

- All staff and drivers are professional and courteous.
- Where appropriate riders are to be escorted to and from the paratransit vehicle by the driver.
- Drivers should assist riders with seat belts, lifts, ramps and securement devices.
- Lifts and ramps shall be operational.
- All buses and vans shall be clean.
- Vehicles shall arrive within 30 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time.

### Compliments

If any staff member associated with providing RTP services has been particularly helpful or gone out of his/her way to provide assistance, you may contact RTP so a note of commendation may be issued to the employee.

### Complaints

Riders may file a complaint any time the service is not satisfactory, safe or secure. Complaints **should** be filed with our Transportation Supervisor. The rider always has the option to call our toll free number 1-800-244-0704 x 7601 or 774-2666 x 7601. You can also email any issues to [customerservice@rtprides.org](mailto:customerservice@rtprides.org)

To assist us with the complaint investigation, please file the complaint as soon as possible.

#### **When filing a complaint please provide the following information:**

- Your first and last name.
- The exact date and time of your trip.
- A complete description of the incident.  The address of your destination.

All complaints are taken seriously and every effort is made to resolve them in a timely manner. If a complaint is filed, riders will be notified of the final resolution.

## ADA General Hours of Operation

*Please refer to Appendix B (back of this guide) for specific information about operating hours*

M-F 5:10 am – 11:45 pm

Saturday: 5:10 am – 11:45 pm

Sunday: 7:45 am – 7:45 pm.

## Office Hours of Operation

M-F 5:30am – 5:00pm

## Contact us

### Address

Regional Transportation Program, Inc.  
1 Ledgeview Dr  
Westbrook, ME 04092

### Telephone

Voice: (207) 774-2666

Or

Toll Free: 1-800-244-0704

RTP uses Maine Relay Services for the hearing impaired. Please call 711 for access to Maine Relay

### Fax Numbers

Administration Number (207) 828-8899  
Reservations and Dispatch (207) 775-1431

### Website

Please visit RTP's web site at: [www.rtprides.org](http://www.rtprides.org)

**Email** [customerservice@rtprides.org](mailto:customerservice@rtprides.org)

## After Hours & Weekend ADA Trip Scheduling Line

Because you can call up to 5pm the day before to schedule your eligible ADA trip, RTP has established an after-hours & weekend ADA trip scheduling line. Our office is closed, but we have on-call dispatchers who check this line regularly. Simply call (207) 774-2666 and follow the after hour prompts for scheduling your ADA eligible trip if our office is closed. We do ask, whenever possible, if you know about your trip ahead of time, to call and schedule during normal business hours.

## **RTP Transportation Service Policies**

Service policies have been developed and implemented to increase efficiency and to ensure safety. RTP has established the following policies:

### **General**

1. ADA Paratransit (ADAPT) Service may be used for any purpose within the defined service area (pick up and drop offs must be within 3/4 of a mile of the fixed route systems). This is not true of other services provided by RTP.
2. Riders may be onboard a vehicle for up to an hour for all trips. This approximates the amount of time riders would likely spend onboard a fixed-route bus vehicle for the same trip.
3. Travel time will vary day-to-day depending on how other trips are scheduled.
4. Riders cannot request to travel alone on a vehicle. Paratransit scheduling is based on a shared ride system. Riders should expect to share vehicles with other riders, companions, Personal Care Attendants and Service Animals.
5. RTP does not grant special requests for specific drivers or vehicles. Riders must ride on the assigned vehicle and with the assigned driver. If a rider uses a mobility device, a lift-equipped vehicle will be assigned.
6. RTP does not provide direct, individual supervision or specialized assistance. Riders may travel with a Personal Care Attendant if the need is documented. RTP does not provide charter service for group or care homes. When rides are scheduled, there is no guarantee that individuals going to or from the same location will necessarily be riding on the same vehicle, have the same pick-up and drop-off times, or be on the vehicle the same amount of time.
7. Every effort will be made to assist riders who may have left items onboard the vehicles. However, RTP is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **Driver Responsibilities**

1. Drivers are required to transport riders to the pre-scheduled destination indicated in the driver's manifest. Drivers are not allowed to make any destination changes.
2. Drivers are prohibited from entering a rider's residence for any reason.
3. Drivers are permitted to go to an external door, lobby or common area within a lobby to pick up a rider when possible. If other riders are on the vehicle, the driver may not be able to leave the vehicle to assist from a rider's door. For example, a senior housing complex rider may be in the

lobby or front entrance for pick-up. Riders will also be dropped off at the external door, lobby, or common area within a lobby.

4. Drivers are advised to keep their vehicles in sight at all times. Pick-ups and drop-offs should be scheduled accordingly.
5. RTP drivers may check the identification of riders. It is recommended that riders carry identifying information with them while using RTP paratransit services.

### **Passenger Responsibilities**

1. Riders must have the address of their destination, their appointment times and other necessary information available when making a ride reservation.
2. If a rider's pick-up address is located inside a gated or secured community that requires special access, it is the rider's responsibility to arrange entry for the paratransit vehicle in advance. If the vehicle is not able to enter the pick-up location and the rider fails to meet the vehicle, a No-Show may be charged.
3. Riders must call in trip cancellations as soon as possible.
4. Riders should be ready to leave up to 30 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time. Drivers can wait only 5 minutes after a rider's scheduled pick-up time.
5. Riders must be prepared for trips. If assistance is required to prepare for a trip, an individual other than the driver must provide assistance.
6. All riders are required to wear seat belts while on the RTP paratransit vehicle. Drivers will assist with seat belts when necessary.
7. Riders are expected to treat reservationists, schedulers, dispatchers, drivers and other riders courteously.
8. Riders must not distract the driver.
9. Wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility devices must be properly maintained. Riders must know the limitations regarding the use and transport of their specific mobility devices.
10. No smoking, eating, or drinking is allowed while on an RTP paratransit vehicle.
11. Riding an RTP paratransit vehicle under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol is not permitted.
12. Radios, cassette, disc players, MP3 players, or cell phones are not permitted to be played aloud when onboard a RTP vehicle.

13. Riders may not bring explosives, flammable liquids, acids, or other hazardous materials on the vehicle.
14. If riders are traveling with a child who needs a car seat, the rider must supply the child's car seat. Riders are responsible for securing it in the vehicle and for its removal.
15. Riders who are physically abusive causing injury to the driver or other riders are subject to criminal prosecution. Immediate suspension or refusal of service will result as described in the following section.

### **Seriously Disruptive Behavior**

ADA regulations allow paratransit service to be denied to riders who engage in violent, illegal or seriously disruptive behavior. Seriously disruptive behavior can include the following:

- Getting out of a seat while the paratransit vehicle is in motion.
- Leaving a paratransit vehicle while it is parked to pick-up or drop-off another rider
  - Disturbing a paratransit vehicle operator while the operator is driving.
- Disturbing other riders.
- Refusing to wear a seat belt or exiting a vehicle.
- Violent behavior.
- Physically or verbally threatening the vehicle operator or another rider.
- Engaging in conduct or activity that is a danger to themselves, other riders, or the driver.
- Smoking while on board a paratransit vehicle. □ Damaging or destroying equipment.

### **Suspension Notices**

RTP, Inc. may suspend riders under the following circumstances:

- Excessive No-Shows
- Seriously disruptive behavior

An appeal may be filed through the RTP, Inc. Appeal Process if a rider is suspended as a result of excessive No-Shows or seriously disruptive behavior.

## USING THE SERVICE

### Scheduling a Trip

ADA approved riders may schedule from up to 14 days in advance but no later than 5:00PM the day before the trip. Riders may schedule multiple rides with one call. RTP dispatchers may negotiate the pick-up time with riders and schedule rides between one hour before and one hour after the desired pick-up time. To schedule rides, the following information is requested:

- The date and time of pick-up and return trip. For return trip information, refer to the section below (Scheduling a Return Trip).
- The exact name and address (including apartment or suite number if known) of the pick-up and drop off locations (including return trip information). Remember that the service is external curb to curb.
- Riders must inform the dispatcher if they are planning to take a Personal Care Attendant, companion or service animal.
- Riders must inform the dispatchers when planning to travel with a mobility device. For more information on traveling with a mobility device please refer to page 18. When the time of arrival is of primary importance, such as a ride to work or an appointment, inform the scheduler. The pickup time will be adjusted to accommodate the time of arrival.
- When the time of arrival is flexible, such as a ride to go shopping or visiting, inform the dispatcher of the more important pick-time time. The dispatcher will provide a drop-off and pick-up time that has been adjusted to fit the more important pick-up time.
- Riders should provide any other pertinent information to the dispatcher. To improve customer service, inform the dispatcher of the time of the appointment and telephone number of the facility if scheduling medical or other appointments.
- Riders must schedule separate drop-off and pick-up times even if only at a location for a short period of time. These times must be a minimum of 30 minutes apart.
- As a general rule, drivers will not wait for riders at any location for more than 5 minutes.
- To maintain scheduling efficiency, it is recommended that riders be ready to depart one ( 1 ) hour before your appointment time. Under ADA, RTP can drop you off up to 30 minutes early before your appointment time and pick you up afterwards up to 30 minutes after your requested return pickup time.

## Scheduling a Return Trip

There are two ways to schedule a return ride. A return ride must be scheduled at a Fixed Time (a ride with a designated return time) or by scheduling a Will Call Return.

- Fixed Time: If a rider knows what time he/she will be ready to return, most return rides are scheduled at the time the initial trip is requested.
- Will Call Return: If a rider does not know what time he/she will return, he/she must schedule a will call return and then also call when he/she is ready to return.

## Scheduling a Will Call Return Trip

- Will Call Returns, scheduled at least a day in advance, and are typically used when riders do not know what time they will be ready to return, such as a medical appointment or visiting with friends. It is the rider's responsibility to call and request a ride when they are ready for the vehicle to pick them up.
- Inform the dispatcher when the initial ride request is made that a Will Call Return will be necessary.
- The Will Call Return telephone number is available from 5:30AM to 5:00 PM at (207) 774-2666 or toll free 1-800-244-0704.
- Once a Will Call Return is requested, the vehicle arrival time may vary. The vehicle may arrive between 5 minutes to 1¼ hours after you call. Riders must be ready to leave when the vehicle arrives.
- Will Call Returns **cannot** be used for a pick-up at your residence.
- Will Call Returns should not be used on Subscription Service.

## Canceling a Ride

If riders must cancel a previously scheduled ride, the cancellation must be received by RTP the day before the ride is scheduled or a minimum of two hours in advance. If a scheduled ride is canceled in a timely manner, no penalties will result.

If a ride is canceled with less than 2 hours before the pick-up time, the rider will receive a No-Show, but will not be charged for the ride. If a ride is canceled at the pick-up time (cancellation at the door), or not cancel at all, the rider will receive a No-Show.

To cancel a previously scheduled ride contact:



- RTP, Inc. using the toll free 1- 800- 244-0704 line or the (207) 774-2666 line during normal business hours 5:30 AM to 5:00 PM
- After hours, leave a message on RTP’s automated system. The same toll free 1-800 244-0704 number may be used or the local number (207) 774-2666.
- Will Call Return rides do not need to be canceled.

A suspension of service may result from excessive cancellations with less than a two-hour notice. RTP will attempt to contact riders when there appears to be significant problems with last-minute cancellations. Penalties for failing to cancel a previously scheduled ride are discussed in the following section.

### **No-Shows**

Section 37.125(h) of the regulations allows for the provision of complementary service to be suspended, for a reasonable period of time, in cases where an individual consistently misses scheduled appointments.

If a trip is not canceled with adequate notice or the vehicle arrives at the pick-up location and the ride is subsequently canceled, the rider will be considered a No-Show (failure to cancel a ride).

A No-Show may be logged on the rider’s record for the following reasons:

- If the trip is canceled with less than two hours’ notice.
- If the driver arrives on time (within the pickup window) to pick up the rider on and the rider subsequently cancels the ride.
- If a rider is not ready to depart when the vehicle arrives for pick-up on time (within the on-time window), and the driver has waited at least 5 minutes.
- If a rider cannot be located at the scheduled pick-up location at the scheduled time and the vehicle has arrived within the pickup window, and the driver has waited at least 5 minutes.

This provision does not apply to trips that are missed for reasons that are beyond the individual’s control. RTP will notify riders if there is a problem with No-Shows.

- 1<sup>st</sup> No-Show: Rider will be contacted by RTP if possible and advised of the No-Show on their record.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> No-Show: Rider will receive a written notification.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> No-Show: Rider are required to confirm with RTP that they will be taking the trip scheduled for that day.
- If more than 4 no-shows within a 30 day period occur, and are greater than 10% of the trips scheduled by that rider, then the rider will be suspended for 1 week for the first offense of 4 no-shows in the period. The second offense will be a 2 week suspension.

If RTP made an error that resulted in a No-Show, there will be no penalty charged to the rider.

### **Subscription Trip Service**

If a rider schedules trips on a routine and regular basis, (i.e. going to school, work or medical appointment) Subscription Service may be requested. With Subscription Service, riders only have to call once to schedule a recurring ride. RTP will schedule the ride on a continuing basis until the request is terminated or the rider's eligibility expires, whichever comes first.

### **To Request Subscription Trip Service**

To request Subscription Service, the following information is required:

- The date and time of pick-up and return trip.
- The exact name and address (including suite or apartment number) of the pick-up and drop-off locations (including return trip information).
- Riders must inform the intake reservationist if they are planning to take a Personal Care Attendant, companion or Service Animal.
- Riders must inform the mobility agent if he or she is traveling with a mobility device. Riders should provide other pertinent information to the mobility agent. To improve customer service, inform the mobility agent of the time of the appointment and the telephone number of the facility if scheduling a medical or other appointment.
- To maintain scheduling efficiency, it is recommended that riders be ready to depart 30 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time as a courtesy to other riders and drivers.

Riders must continue to call to schedule rides that were requested with Subscription Service until notified by RTP that the request for Subscription Service has been approved.

### **Using Subscription Service**

- Rider pick-up times may vary with Subscription Service. Riders should be ready 30 minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time.
- Will Call Returns should be used on Subscription Service.

## **Late Vehicles**

If a vehicle is more than 30 minutes late, immediately call RTP at 774-2666 or toll free at 1-800- 244-0704. If you experience late vehicles on a regular basis, contact RTP's Transportation Supervisor at (207) 774-2666 x 7601 as soon as possible. We appreciate your input if there are problems on a regular basis. It is important for us to know what problems may be occurring so we can address and resolve the issues.

## **Wait Time**

In general drivers will wait for riders at the designated pick-up for 5 minutes. If a rider does not appear for boarding the vehicle within that time period, the driver will contact dispatch and request that a telephone call is made to the rider's domicile.

## **Helpful Hints**

### ***You May Call for ETA information***

You may call dispatch at any time for an estimated time of arrival.

### ***Please Provide Clear Directions***

Always provide dispatch with complete directions. Include building names, street address, and landmarks, for your stops. This information will help the driver find your stop efficiently.

### ***Create a Driver Message***

RTP has over 60 bus, van and volunteer drivers! When you schedule a trip, you may want our drivers to have a specific message about your needs or your trip. So when necessary, make sure you ask the mobility agent to include a trip note to the driver.

### ***Specify if you Need Courtesy Calls***

If you have a reason for the accommodation, visual impairment or the like, and must be warned when the bus is arriving, you must specify the need as a passenger assistance technique when the trip is booked.

### ***Mobility Devices May be Brought on Vehicle***

Devices such as walkers, canes, crutches, wheel chairs, or scooters may be brought onto the vehicle. These should be identified in advance when you schedule your trip with the dispatcher, so the driver is aware of the item.

### ***Smoking, Eating and Drinking***

Smoking, eating and drinking of any type is strictly prohibited on the vehicle.

### ***Lost and Found***

RTP is not responsible for items lost or stolen on the bus. However, you may call dispatch for information regarding lost items that might be turned in to RTP. Unless claimed or identified, lost and found items are discarded after 5 days.

### ***Radios, Cassette Players, MP3 Players, iPods, Cell Phones***

May be used with earphones, but may not play through external speakers.

### ***Curb to Curb is the General Rule of Service***

Our standard service is curb-to-curb. However, assistance to and from the vehicle would be provided to persons with disabilities as needed. Assistance will only be provided to the first exterior door and not 'through' the first door. Assistance will be provided as long as the driver can maintain effective continuing control of the vehicle which includes not leaving the vehicle unattended or out of observation for a lengthy period of time.

### ***Shared Ride Service***

RTP provides "shared ride" transportation. This means other riders are picked up and dropped off along the way.

### ***Ride times that compare with METRO and South Portland Bus Service***

In general the length of an RTP ride compares with a ride on the METRO. With pick-ups and drop off along the way an in town trip can take 45 - 60 minutes from origin to destination.

### ***Cancellations***

When you don't need a ride, always call dispatch as soon as possible and cancel the trip, *No later than two hours before your pick-up time is the latest you should call to cancel and greatly appreciated.*

### ***No Shows***

If you cancel at the door, fail to cancel on time, or do not show up when the driver arrives, your account will be charged with a no-show. Three "no shows" within any 3 calendar months, will mean the automatic loss of your Subscription Service schedule. You will need to call a dispatcher each time you need a ride.

### ***ADA Fares and Tickets (FARES MUST BE PAID EACH TIME YOU BOARD A VEHICLE)***

You are required to provide an ADA ticket or exact fare of \$ 2.50 when you ride the ADA. Purchase tickets through the mail by writing to: RTP-ADA Tickets, 1 Ledgeview Dr, Westbrook ME 04092. Enclose a check or money order to cover the number of \$2.50 tickets you want to purchase and RTP will send them to you by mail. RTP customer service desk is open M-F between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at our customer service center at 1 Ledgeview Dr Westbrook.

**Note:** ADA riders who do not have a prepaid ticket or \$2.50 in cash/check will be refused a ride at the time of pick up.

### ***Complaints, Incident Reports and Grievances***

RTP strives to provide excellent service to all our riders, and we appreciate your feedback. If you have any concerns or comments about our service, please call our Transportation Supervisor at 774-2666 x

7601, or if you prefer your comment or concern in writing, please email it to [customerservice@rtprides.org](mailto:customerservice@rtprides.org) or mail it to: Transportation Supervisor, RTP, 1 Ledgeview Dr, Westbrook, ME 04092. RTP will respond to complaints within 7 business days. You can also find our complaint process on our website at [www.rtprides.org](http://www.rtprides.org) under the “About RTP” section. Also as seen with Attachment A.

### ***Service Animals***

RTP Riders with disabilities accompanied by a service animal are welcome. The service animal is the responsibility of its owner and must be under the control of its owner at all times (i.e., leash, harness or carrier). The service animal must ride in the vehicle within the rider's space. The service animal may not travel in the aisle or occupy a seat. RTP reserves the right to refuse passage to any service animal that poses a direct threat to the health and safety of other riders, RTP personnel or volunteers.

### ***Therapy Animals***

Therapy animals are not permitted unless specifically approved by dispatch. They must be muzzled, and ride on the floor. RTP reserves the right to deny transportation of therapy animals.

### ***PCAs Ride Free***

Travel aides, escorts, personal care attendants, may ride free of charge from the rider pick-up location to the rider drop off location. If a PCA is expected to ride along, always tell the dispatcher in advance to assure an available seat.

### ***Traveling companions must be authorized***

Riders may also travel with one companion (a guest not service as a PCA). Additional companions will be accommodated on a “space available” basis. The request must be made through dispatch in advance. Companions pay the same fee as the rider.

### ***Scooters***

For rider safety reasons, RTP requests that scooter riders transfer from the scooter and ride on the bus seat, not on the scooter seat. Scooters must be tied down in transit. Scooters should be equipped for use with tie downs during transit. RTP cannot be held responsible for damages sustained to scooters in normal transit when tie-down handles are not present.

### ***Cancellations and Delays***

RTP reserves the right to cancel routes or delay travel without notice to the rider due to weather, traffic conditions, vehicle breakdown, accidents, and the like. RTP generally announces major cancellations through radio or television. If for any reason you have a question about your ride, call RTP dispatch at 774-2666 or 1-800-244-0704 for the latest information on cancellations, travel delays or for the estimated time of arrival for your trip.

### ***Contagious Diseases***

RTP does not transport those who are contagious according to the State Bureau of Public Health. For example: mumps, measles, chicken pox, and head lice.

### ***Wheel Chair Lifts***

The sole purpose of the wheelchair lift is for wheel chair or ambulatory riders who cannot walk up the vehicle steps. Lifts are not for moving large packages on or off the vehicle.

### ***Loading and Unloading Safety Zones***

Service agencies and group homes must provide for safe loading and unloading zones for RTP buses and vans.

### ***Scheduling Assistance Needs***

If you know that you will need assistance, please let us know in advance when possible. This will help with scheduling your ride. If you find on your day of your trip assistance is needed, please let the driver know and the driver will provide assistance to and from the first exterior door as long as the driver can maintain effective continuing control of the vehicle which includes not leaving the vehicle unattended or out of observation for a lengthy period of time.

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## **APENDICES**

- A. RTP (ADA) Appeals Policy
- B. Hours of Operation
- C. Wheelchair Policy
- D. Map of Service Area
- E. Definitions

## A. Appeals Policy and Procedures

### Procedures

- The applicant will be provided reasons in writing (or in a format accessible to the applicant) for denial of eligibility or suspension due to No-Shows.
- The applicant has 60 days from the date of the denial or suspension to request an appeal hearing. Appeals should be sent to: RTP Executive Director, 1 Ledgeview Dr, Westbrook, ME 04092 or can be emailed to customerservice@rtprides.org
- The applicant has the right to have their case heard in person and bring an advocate or personal representative to the hearing scheduled by RTP, Inc.
- RTP, Inc. will make a decision on the appeal as soon as possible. The decision cannot exceed 30 calendar days or the applicant may receive service beginning the next calendar day until a decision is made.
- RTP, Inc. is responsible for establishing local appeals procedures. RTP, Inc. will:
  1. Establish an appeals panel.
  2. The panel will be structured to ensure an impartial review.
  3. The panel will consist of :
    - A. Three persons:
      1. One “peer”.
      2. One person with applicable professional experience working with persons with disabilities and,
      3. One member of the RTP Board of Directors.
    4. The decision of the appeal panel will be provided in writing, and will be final.
    5. Applicants may reinstate the service eligibility process any time there is a change in their functional ability which prevents them from using the fixed route systems.
    6. RTP will provide auxiliary assistance (e.g. interpreter services, transportation, material in an accessible format, and so forth) to ensure the applicant may fully participate in the hearing.

## **Days and Schedules of Service Operations**

1. RTP, Inc. coordinates its complimentary paratransit service with those days and schedules of METRO and the South Portland Bus System.
  
2. **Monday – Friday - METRO & South Portland Bus Service Areas**  
Generally, RTP provides ADA eligible service from 5:10 am – 11:45 pm on a route by route basis. This is the earliest and latest times their vehicles are on the road; however, however, certain routes may start later, end earlier, or not run at all depending on the area. We provide ADA service based on the route times for the trips origin and destination. RTP looks at METRO and South Portland Bus Service Schedules for actual hours of operation per route.
  
3. **Saturday – METRO Service Area**  
Generally, RTP provides ADA eligible service from 5:10am – 11:45pm on a route by route basis. This is the earliest and latest times METRO’s vehicles are on the road; however, certain routes may start later, end earlier, or not run at all depending on the area. We provide ADA service based on the route times for the trips origin and destination. RTP looks at METRO’s bus schedules for actual hours of operation per route.
  
4. **Saturday – South Portland Bus Service Area**  
Generally, RTP provides ADA eligible service from 6:40am – 6:55pm on a route by route basis. This is the earliest and latest times South Portland Bus Service vehicles are on the road; however, certain routes may start later, end earlier, or not run at all depending on the area. We provide ADA service based on the route times for the trips origin and destination. RTP looks at South Portland Bus Service’s bus schedules for actual hours of operation per route.
  
5. **Sunday – METRO Service Area** Generally, RTP provides ADA eligible service from 7:45am – 7:45pm on a route by route basis. This is the earliest and latest times METRO’s vehicles are on the road; however, certain routes may start later, end earlier, or not operate at all depending on the area. We provide ADA service based on the route times for the trips origin and destination. RTP looks at METRO’s bus schedules for actual hours of operation per route.
  
6. **Sunday Service – South Portland Bus Service** Generally, RTP provides ADA eligible service from 6:45am to 6:40pm on a route by route basis. This is the earliest and latest times SPBS vehicles are on the road; however, certain routes may start later, end earlier, or not operation at all depending on the area. We provide ADA service based on the route times for the trips origin and destination. RTP looks at SPBS’s bus schedules for actual hours of operation per route.
  
7. RTP does not operate its ADA service on those days when METRO and/or South Portland Bus Service systems are not running.



### Wheelchair Policy

#### Definitions:

Section 37.3 of the DOT's regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38) defines "wheelchair" as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or four-wheeled devices that is usable indoors and designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

*Note:* A transportation provider is not required to carry a wheelchair if, in fact, the lift or vehicle is truly unable to accommodate the wheelchair and its user, consistent with legitimate safety requirements.

If an electric scooter or other mobility device meets the physical specifications of a wheelchair as defined by the DOT's ADA regulations, it will be treated as a wheelchair.

Section 38.23(d) of the DOT ADA regulations requires all ADA-compliant vehicles to have a two – part securement system: one to secure the wheelchair and a seatbelt and shoulder harness for the wheelchair user. Section 38.23(a) requires vehicles over 22 feet in length to have enough securement locations and devices to secure two wheelchairs while vehicles 22 feet and under must be able to accommodate at least one wheelchair.

#### Policy Sections:

1. As allowed by Section 37.165 of the DOT's ADA regulations, it is the policy of Regional Transportation Program, Inc. (RTP) to require all riders to have their wheelchairs secured while aboard an RTP vehicle. Therefore, the driver will decline to provide service to a rider who refuses to allow his or her wheelchair to be secured.
2. The DOT ADA regulations' definition of a wheelchair does not include a requirement for brakes or any other equipment. It is the policy of RTP not to deny transportation to a wheelchair user because the wheelchair does not have brakes, or the wheelchair user does not choose to set the brakes.
3. Under Section 37.165 of the DOT's ADA regulations, it is the policy of RTP to require drivers to use their best efforts to secure any mobility device that meets the regulatory definition of a wheelchair. RTP will not refuse to accommodate a wheelchair – including a scooter or other specialized mobility device that complies with the DOT ADA regulations – because the wheelchair cannot be secured to the driver's satisfaction. It is incumbent upon RTP to consult with the manufacturers of securement devices and wheelchairs, as well as the owner of the wheelchair, to determine the best means of securement.
4. Under the broad non-discrimination provisions in Section 37.5 of the DOT ADA regulations, it is the policy of RTP that all riders, including those who use wheelchairs and those who use vehicles

seats, must wear seat belts and shoulder harnesses when these are provided at all seating locations. RTP will be in compliance with State of Maine Seatbelt Law at all times.

### **Wheelchair Policy - Continued**

5. Under Section 37.173, it is the policy of RTP that it will be responsible for the safe and nondiscriminatory transportation of its riders. RTP will train its drivers to properly assist and treat individuals with disabilities with sensitivity and to operate its vehicles and equipment safely. RTP will also train its drivers to use accessibility equipment and to accommodate the different types of wheelchairs

6. RTP will not provide attendant-type services (e.g., carrying riders, personal baggage or suitcases). However, as required by the DOT ADA regulations, RTP will provide assistance with boarding and disembarking, including pushing a manual wheelchair up a particularly steep ramp.

7. Under Section 37.161 of the DOT ADA regulations, it is the policy of RTP to maintain and repair the accessibility equipment. As a requirement of Section.163, it is the policy of RTP to establish a schedule or system to ensure regular and frequent maintenance checks and to take a vehicle out of service to repair or replace broken or missing equipment before returning the vehicle to service. In some instances RTP will provide alternative accessible transportation if the accessibility equipment is not present or not working.

8. Under Section 37.165(a) of the DOT ADA regulations, it is the policy of RTP to allow persons who use wheelchairs to transfer to a vehicle seat, if one is available. Such a move is the rider's decision and the driver will not force a rider to transfer to a vehicle seat. The driver may suggest a transfer in a noncoercive way. It is RTP's policy that the driver does not lift or pull on the rider to assist a transfer into a seat. The driver may hold the wheelchair in place while the rider transfers to a seat.

9. Most RTP ADA accessible vehicles can accommodate wheelchairs up to 34inches wide x 50 inches in length and a combined weight of passenger and wheelchair up to 800lbs.

**This policy document is subject to revision with notice.**

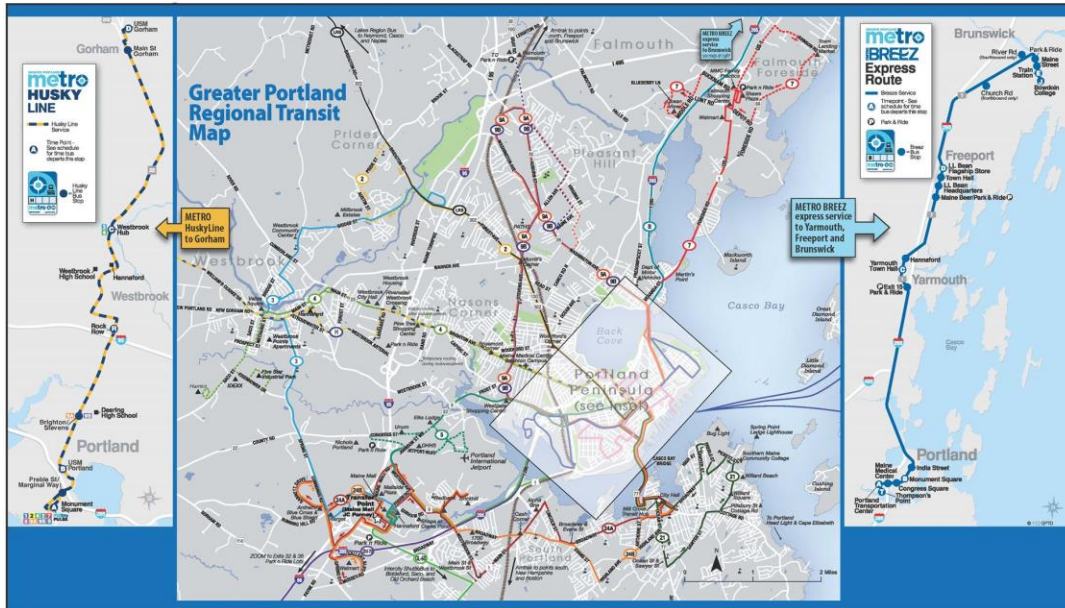
Revision. 6/2003  
Revision 2/2006  
Revision 6/2012  
Revision 4/2016  
Revision 5/2016  
Revision 4/2017  
Revision 6/2017  
Revision 01/2018  
Revision 10/2019  
Revision 01/2023  
Revision 09/2023

# Appendix D

## Service Area

All rides must begin and end within ¾ of a mile of the fixed route systems – METRO and South Portland Bus Systems, excluding the Breeze Line on the Metro Service Map. A service area map of the fixed route systems is included below.

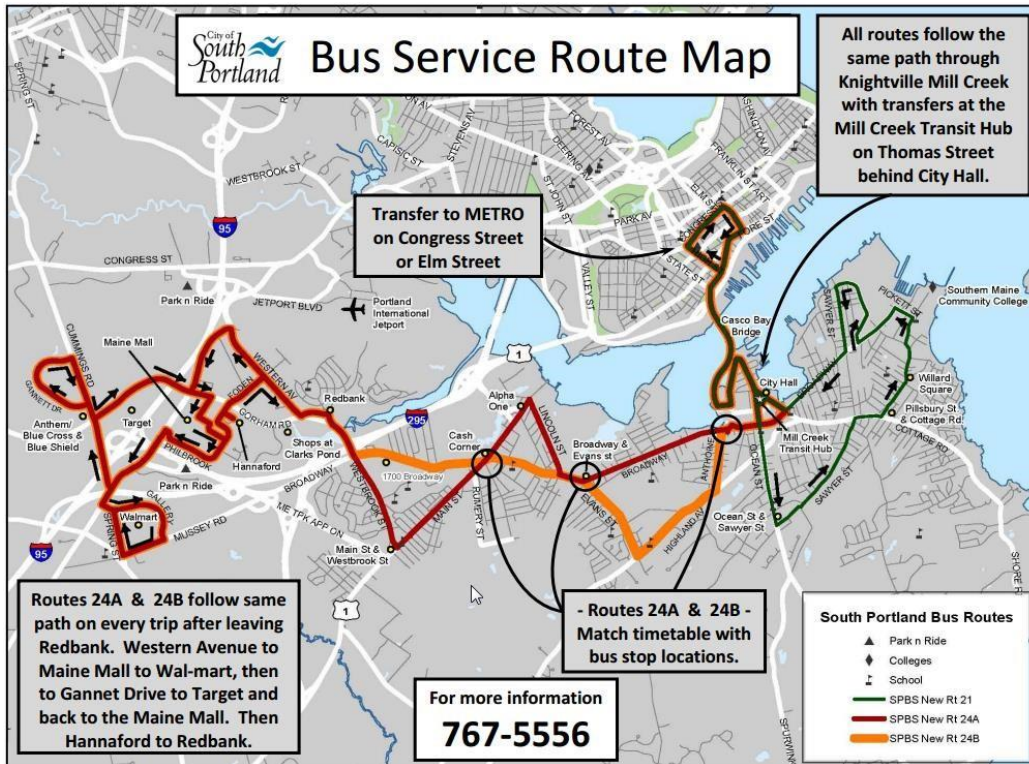
# Greater Portland Regional Transit Map



Effective January 2023

METRO

# South Portland Bus Service Map



### Definitions

#### **ADA Eligible Trip**

A trip for an approved ADA rider in which the origin and destination falls within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the fixed route system (as the crow flies); when the fixed route system is in operation; and when there is a fixed route serving the area.

#### **Trip Denial**

An eligible ADA trip request from an eligible ADA rider that cannot be accommodated within an hour of the original requested time; or the trip cannot be done at all; or if the rider requests a trip at a certain time and you negotiate a time outside of the allowed 1 hour window and the trip is completed at the later time (example – rider wants to be somewhere at 9am. The trip cannot be done at 9am but the rider is told it can be done at 2pm. Even though the trip is done at 2pm, it is still considered a denial because the 9am trip could not be accommodated). Round trips that cannot be scheduled because one leg cannot be scheduled within an hour of the requested time will count as 2 trip denials.

#### **On Time Performance**

On time performance occurs within 0 – 30 minutes of the requested pick up time (timing preference = pickup in transportation software system). Pick up is equal to being picked up from appointment location (after appointment). Ex: if you request a 2pm pick up from your appointment, RTP can pick you up from 2pm until 2:30pm and still be considered on time.

On time performance occurs within 30 to 0 minutes of the requested drop off time (timing preference = appointment time in transportation software system). Ex: if your appointment time is 10am, RTP can drop you off anytime from 9:30 am to 10am and be considered on time.

Riders need to be ready 1 hour before their scheduled appointment time.

#### **Missed Trip**

A missed trip is defined as a scheduled trip that never got picked up at the agreed upon location; or the trip was not taken because the vehicle arrived late.

#### **Excessively Long Trips**

An excessively long trip is defined as a trip that take more than 15 minutes longer than a comparable trip on the fixed route including walking time to and from the bus stop to the location (and any transfer time if applicable).



## Attachment A

### Complaint Policy Process

Regional Transportation Program is committed to providing reliable, safe, and satisfying transportation options for the community. Riders of RTP are a fundamental aspect of our business and as such, their feedback is crucial to the growth and development of the agency.

The RTP Rider Complaint Policy has been established to ensure that riders of the system have an easy and accessible way to provide feedback to the agency. RTP is open to hearing any rider feedback including complaints, comments, suggestions, or concerns.

**Contacting RTP:** Riders can contact RTP in the following ways:

1. **US Mail:** Riders can mail their feedback to the RTP office at; COMPLAINT 1 Ledgeview Dr, Westbrook ME 04092.
2. **Phone:** Riders can contact RTP at 207-774-2666. RTP is open for business Monday through Friday 8:00AM to 4:00 PM
3. **E-mail:** Riders can contact RTP by e-mail at [customerservice@rtprides.org](mailto:customerservice@rtprides.org)
4. **Fax:** Riders can send written feedback by fax to 207-828-8899.
5. **Language Line:** For riders who speak a language other than English, RTP will arrange for a translator through a language line if necessary.
6. **Website:** Riders can offer feedback on the [RTP's Facebook page](#).

**Feedback Review Process:** All feedback from riders is valued and will be reviewed by the Transportation Supervisor. After review, the Transportation Supervisor will distribute the rider communication to the appropriate agency representative(s).

1. Rider concerns, complaints, or employee recommendations will be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor.
2. Recommendations for service or system modification will be sent to the Executive Director.
3. Questions regarding discrimination or bias will be sent to the Executive Director.

**Feedback Acknowledgement:** Anyone who submits a complaint or service suggestion to RTP shall receive a response provided they give legible contact information within 7 business days.

**Rider Appeals Process:** Any person who is dissatisfied with the response they receive from RTP is welcome to appeal the decision. A review team consisting of the Executive Director, the Operations Manager, and Member(s) of the Board of Directors and Community Coordinator will review rider appeals.

**Information about Policy:** Information about the Rider Complaint Policy, including how to submit a complaint, will be made available to riders:

1. At the main office
2. On the website

**Reporting:** The Executive Director shall compile a summary of rider responses for the board, staff, and employees for use in reviewing and evaluating service.

**Tracking:** RTP shall maintain a tracking system for all complaints from riders / agencies.

**Protection from Retribution:** Riders of RTP should be able to submit feedback without fear of retribution from the agency. If a rider feels like they are being treated unfairly in response to the feedback that they provided, they should contact the RTP Operations Manager.



Name:
Address:
City/State/Zip:
Work Phone:
Home Phone:
e-mail address:
Nature of Comment: Suggestion Compliment Complaint Other
Date of Incident:
Time of Incident: _____ AM / PM
Bus Number/ Driver Name:
Location of Incident (Include nearest cross streets):
Employee Name:
Specific Suggestions or Report: