



# RTA Mobility General Guidelines

RTA Mobility is a curb-to-curb, shared ride transportation service for riders who are unable to ride RTA transit system fixed route due to a disability or age. “Shared ride” means multiple riders riding together in the same vehicle at the same time. RTA Mobility provides two (2) types of service: American with Disability Act (ADA) and General Paratransit (GPT); throughout the Central Maryland Regional Transit zones: Howard County, Anne Arundel County, City of Laurel, and Northern Prince George’s County.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Service**

*Eligibility is required to obtain service.*

- **Eligibility:** Anyone with a physical, cognitive, or emotional disability which prevents them from being able to use fixed route bus service.
- **Certification process:** Requires a 2 part application (Part A applicant and Part B physician). Applicants also required to have a face-to-face interview
- **How to obtain an application:** Call 1-800-270-9553 option 3, then option 6, Maryland Relay 711, by writing to RTA Mobility at 8510 Corridor Rd. Suite 110-Savage, MD 20763 or visit our website at [www.transitrt.com](http://www.transitrt.com)
- **Trips service area:** Trips must begin and end within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of a current RTA *fixed route*. Service is available on the same days and times of RTA’s *fixed route* service.
- **ADA trips:** RTA Mobility does not provide same day service. All trips must be reserved at least ***one day in advance***, trips can be reserved up to 7 days in advance. Unlimited number of trips per day for any purpose is allowed.
- **To schedule your ADA ride:** Call 1-800-270-9553 option 3. The reservation line is open Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM; Saturday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM; Sunday 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Please call as early as possible to make scheduling easier.
- **Trip call reminder:** All riders will receive a call the evening before their trip/s from our Interacted Voice Respond (IVR) system letting the rider know their approximate scheduled pick-up/s time.
- **Rider must to be ready to travel within the 30-minute pick-up window.** 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after trip scheduled time. When your driver arrives, and driver is unable to locate the rider, dispatcher will call rider; driver is then required to wait three (3) minutes into the pick-up window before departing to the next assignment.
- **Trips pick-up time:** Trip pick-up times may be adjusted up to 30 minutes before or after the reservation time, depending on the ridership. Adjusted pickup/s (trips) times will not impact the drop off time.
- **Onboard travel time:** Trips may require up to 60 minutes of travel time (distance 0 miles to 9.99 miles). Trips distance 10 miles or longer may require up to 90 minutes travel time.

- **ADA Fare:** Howard County ADA fare \$4.00 for each one-way trip. ADA fare for other counties \$4.00 for each one-way trip. Exact fare or pre-paid ticket is required. Drivers do not make change.
- **RTA Mobility ticket booklets:** Booklets may be purchased from designated Howard County Senior Centers, the RTA administration office or by visiting [www.transitrtta.com](http://www.transitrtta.com).
- **Eligible riders may travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), companion or other guest.** The first guest rides for free, any additional guests must pay full fare, based on space availability. RTA Mobility does not provide Personal Care Attendants. Be sure to notify the reservationist if a companion will ride with you and if your companion uses a wheelchair or scooter. Children traveling as companion/guest, age five and older must pay the full fare.

## **ADA Visitor's Policy**

- Visitors can access RTA Mobility ADA Paratransit service for twenty-one (21) days
- If the visitor plans to use RTA Mobility ADA Paratransit services for more than 21 days, he or she will need to formally apply for eligibility certification.
- Visitors are requested to provide documentation: ADA certified from the jurisdiction in which they received their ADA certification.
- If the individual is not able to provide such documentation from another public entity, eligibility will not be granted
- Mobility Fare \$4.00 for each one-way ride.

## **Severe Weather or Hazardous Conditions: ADA Service**

- During severe weather, icy or otherwise hazardous road conditions or emergency situations, RTA Mobility may make service modifications. Examples of severe weather or hazardous conditions are icy roads, snow accumulation, high winds and tornados. During severe weather or hazardous conditions, door-to-door service may revert to curb-to-curb service as needed or service may be cancelled. RTA Mobility service changes due to severe weather will be announced on our 1-800-270-9553, Maryland Relay 711 or by visiting RTA website at [www.transitRTA.com](http://www.transitRTA.com).

## **RTA Mobility: General Paratransit (GPT) service**

*Rider must be a Howard County Resident*

- **Eligibility:** must be a Howard County resident, 60 years of age or older, if applicant is younger than 60 years old (18-59); applicant is required to complete GPT medical information form.
- **Certification process:** complete GPT application. Two (2) part application (Part A applicant and Part B physician).
- **How to obtain an application:** Call 1-800-270-9553 option 3, then option 6, Maryland Relay 711, by writing to RTA Mobility at 8510 Corridor Rd. Suite 110-Savage, MD 20763 or visit our website at [www.transitrtta.com](http://www.transitrtta.com).

- **Trips service:** within Howard County, trip reservations must be made at least **two (2) business days in advance**, weekends are not included. Trips can be reserved up to seven (7) days in advance. Riders are limited to one (1) round trip per day. RTA Mobility does not provide same day service or personal care attendants (PCA)
- **GPT trips:** To medical appointments, senior centers, social service agencies, employment and colleges. Trips service hours Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Medical trips to Baltimore City to selected major hospitals are available Monday, Wednesday and Friday, call for more details
- **To schedule your GPT ride:** Call 1-800-270-9553 option 3, then option 1, or Maryland Relay 711. Reservation line is open Monday through Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- **Trip call reminder:** All riders will receive a call the evening before their trip/s from Interacted Voice Respond (IVR) system letting the rider know their approximate scheduled pick-up/s time.
- **Rider must to be ready to travel within the 30-minute pick-up window.** 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after trip scheduled time. When your driver arrives, and driver is unable to locate the rider, dispatcher will call rider; driver is then required to wait three (3) minutes into the pick-up window before departing to the next assignment.
- **Exceptions to pick-up times:** Trip pick-up times may be adjusted up to 30 minutes before or after the reservation time, depending on the ridership. Adjusted pickup/s (trips) times will not impact the drop off/s time.
- **Onboard Travel Time:** Trips may require up to 60 minutes of travel time (distance 0 miles to 9.99 miles). Trips distance 10 miles or longer may require up to 90 minutes of travel time.
- **GPT Fare:** \$5.00 each way. Rider/s may travel with an escort on a space available basis, all escorts must pay full fare. Exact fare or a pre-paid mobility ticket is required. Drivers do not make change.
- **RTA Mobility ticket booklets:** Booklets may be purchased from designated Howard County Senior Centers, the RTA administration office or by visiting [www.transitrt.com](http://www.transitrt.com).
- **Eligible riders may travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), companion or other guest.** Any guests must pay full fare, based on space availability. RTA Mobility does not provided Personal Care Attendants. Be sure to notify the reservationist if a companion will ride with you and if your companion uses a wheelchair or scooter. Children traveling as companion/guest, age five and older must pay the full fare.

### **Inclement weather policy: GPT**

- During severe weather, icy or otherwise hazardous road conditions or emergency situations, RTA Mobility may make service modifications. Examples of severe weather or hazardous conditions are icy roads, snow accumulation, high winds and tornados
- RTA Mobility service changes due to severe weather will be announced on our 1-800-270-9553 Maryland Relay 711 or by visiting the RTA website at [www.transitRTA.com](http://www.transitRTA.com).
- If Howard County Schools open with a one hour delay, service will not be affected.
- If Howard County Schools are closed for the day then All 50+ Centers and Senior Centers sites shall be closed

- If Howard County Schools open with two (2) hours delay. 50+ Centers and Senior Centers shall open at 10:00 a.m. and all programming begins at this time. Please note; any programming scheduled for prior to 10:00 a.m. shall be cancelled and or rescheduled. The Glenwood and North Laurel 50+ Centers will follow the Recreation & Park scheduled and have a delayed opening at 10:30 a.m.
- RTA Mobility may make service modifications for medical and employment appointments depending on weather conditions

### **Reservations Tips: ADA and GPT**

Be prepared with the exact address of your pick-up and drop off locations. If your pick-up location is at a building with more than one entrance, indicate which entrance you will use. Inform Customer Service Representative if you will be riding with a mobility aid, companion or personal care assistant (PCA). Arrange your pick-up and return trip at the same time. Potential trip delays: traffic, shared ride with others, safety and weather conditions. For all return trips allow RTA Mobility a minimum of one (1) hour between drop off and return trips. All RTA Mobility reservation times can be or will be adjusted within 30 minutes before or after your original requested time to provide services for all riders. All trips are treated with equal priority.

### **Subscription trips services: ADA and GPT**

- Riders must demonstrate travel to the destination consistently over a 30-day period before subscription service can begin. This means riders must travel to the same destination, with similar pick-up and drop-off times, at least once a week, for a 30-day period.
- If the destination and/or origin address changes, the rider has to cancel their current subscription and a new subscription must be implemented. The rider must again demonstrate a pattern of the new subscription, as described above, before it is approved.
- Subscription service will be automatically cancelled on all federal holidays.
- Established riders must continue to book trips individually for their travel. Trips may be booked with Reservations from one to seven days in advance.
- Subscriptions that have been inactive for longer than 30 days may be cancelled. The rider is responsible for re-booking inactive subscription trips.

### **To cancel a trip: ADA and GPT**

- Same day trips call 1-800-270-9553 option 3, then option 2 (dispatch)
- To cancel trips in advance call 1-800-270-9553 option 3 (call center)
- RTA Mobility prefers 24 hours advance cancellations notice, 24 hours advance cancellations improves customers service, on time performance and efficiency

### **Type of Vehicles used to serve RTA Mobility Riders**

- RTA Buses & Transit-Vans: color white with RTA logos
- RTA Sedans: color white with RTA logos
- Taxi companies: Columbia Cab

All riders/trips are scheduled accordingly to accommodate daily ridership. Riders cannot request a type of vehicle or a driver. RTA vehicles are not permitted on private property (driveways).

### **Wheelchair lift Accessibility and Secured all Mobility Devices**

- All buses and transit-vans are wheelchair lift equipped. Lifts can accommodate mobility devices such as wheelchairs and scooters with dimensions of up to 48” height by 30” width and they can accommodate a combined passenger plus device weight of up to 600 pounds.
- All wheelchairs, scooters and similar mobility devices be secured in the securement area of the vehicle. If a rider refuses to allow his/her device to be secured, RTA Mobility driver will offer rider the alternative of transferring to a regular seat (by themselves), if rider refuses, RTA Mobility will not be able to transport rider to destination.
- All mobility devices will be secured facing forward, if a rider transferred to a regular seat driver will secured mobility devices for safety.

### **Warnings and Suspensions: ADA and GPT**

- No shows
- Late cancellation
- Fare non-payment
- Inappropriate behavior
- Unsafe behavior

For complete policy of Warnings, Suspensions and Appeals call 1-800-270-9553 option 3, then option 6, Maryland Relay 711, by writing to RTA Mobility at 8510 Corridor Rd. Suite 110-Savage, MD 20763 or visit our website at [www.transitrt.com](http://www.transitrt.com)

### **Certification Denial Appeal Process: ADA and GPT**

A rider may appeal: warning/s, suspension, an ADA denial certification and a GPT denial certification by submitting an appeal in writing to: RTA Mobility Department, Attention: Appeals, 8510 Corridor Rd, Suite 110, Savage, Maryland 20763 or fax 443-285-0050. Appeals need to be made within twenty (21) calendar days of the date of notice. Appeals are received by RTA Mobility Department then presented to Appeals Committee/Board for review and final decision. A final decision will be mailed to the rider within twenty (21) calendar days of the date appeal letter is received. If a rider appeals a suspension notice, the suspension will not take effect until after the appeal decision is made. For any assistance or to request accommodations in the appeal process contact RTA Mobility by calling 1-800-270-9553, option 3, Maryland Relay 711 at 1-800-201-7165, fax 443-285-0050, write to us at RTA Mobility 8510 Corridor Rd., Suite 110, Savage, MD 20763 or email RTAMobility@transitRTA.com. RTA Mobility will take reasonable steps to provide access to individuals who are unable to read, speak, write or understand English. Standardized procedures have been developed to ensure that interpretation (oral) and translation (written) services are available to RTA Mobility riders with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

## No Strand Policy: ADA and GPT

- RTA Mobility is committed to the safety and security of the rider, employees and the public. When transportation is provided for a rider to a given location, RTA Mobility will make every attempt to provide the return trip, even if the rider fails to appear for boarding within the scheduled pickup window. Return service will be provided as soon as possible, but may be delayed depending upon prevailing traffic conditions and scheduling considerations.
- If a rider is marked as a no-show for the first trip (origin), a second vehicle will not be dispatch to accommodate rider. RTA Mobility does not provided same day service.

## Seatbelt Securement Policy: ADA and GPT

- For the safety of all riders and RTA drivers, RTA Mobility Securement Policy requires all riders riding in a mobility device to wear both the lap belt and shoulder belt at all times while riding. All others riders must wear regular seat belt when riding. RTA Mobility is within compliance with applicable traffic state laws and ADA laws. The safety belts are designed to protect riders and prevent injuries.

## Door-to-Door Service: ADA riders only

*Door-to-Door: Drivers will provide the following assistance*

- Knock on the outermost exterior door and identify themselves as "RTA Mobility". At public entrances, drivers may open the outermost exterior door to announce their arrival—however they **may not** enter the building. If the public entrance has a small vestibule with a second door nearby that leads to a waiting area, drivers may open the second door to announce their arrival, but will **not** proceed into the waiting area. Drivers are not permitted to open doors at private locations or residences.
- Ask rider to show a valid RTA Mobility ID card and collect full fare for trip.
- Ask the rider "How may I assist you?"
- Accompany and assist the rider along the entire path of travel between the first exterior door and the vehicle.
- Guide riders who are visually impaired or have low vision (rider's approval/ request).
- Maneuver the rider's manual wheelchair (per rider's approval/request).
- Allow riders to hold the driver's arm for balance.
- Carry a limited amount of packages for the rider, **not to exceed 20 pounds**, and capable of being transported **in a single trip to the exterior door**.
- Escort the rider on/off the vehicle, operate vehicle lift if required, and ensure proper securement of the rider (including seatbelt securement) and mobility devices. It is important to note that the driver is not a personal care assistant and **is not permitted to provide assistance beyond what is outlined in this guide**. Riders are responsible for making arrangements for any additional assistance.
- Providing physical support for a rider to walk between the vehicle and the outermost exterior door of the pick-up or destination.
- Operating the controls of an electronically operated mobility device.

**Door-to-Door service is offer when is safe to do so.**

- The outermost exterior door must be no more than 150 feet from the vehicle.
- The driver must be able to maintain sight of the vehicle at all times.
- There must be a direct accessible path and safe access from the vehicle to door.
- There must be safe parking on a public roadway or public parking lot.
- The parked vehicle must not block or impede traffic.
- Service must be requested at the time of the trip/s reservation.

**Curb-to-Curb Service: ADA and GPT riders**

*RTA Mobility drivers will provide the following assistance*

- Drivers will assist all riders to get on and off the vehicle
- Drivers will not escort rider in and out of buildings/homes
- Driver will not wait with rider at their destination.
- Drivers will assist rider by allowing riders to hold the driver's arm for balance or fasten seatbelts
- Driver will guide riders who are visually impaired or have low vision (per rider's approval/ request)
- Drivers will ask riders "How may I assist you?"

**Restrictions: ADA and GPT services**

*RTA Mobility drivers are strictly prohibited from*

- Entering or unlocking a rider's private residence at any time.
- Assisting a rider using a wheelchair up or down steps or curbs to or from RTA vehicle.
- Waiting with customers at their destination.
- Handling a service animal.
- Making personal unscheduled stops at the request of the rider.
- Assisting a rider in removing a jacket and/or repositioning in a wheelchair.
- Assisting a rider with changing oxygen canisters.
- Traveling with or meeting a rider who cannot be left unattended at the destination.
- Traveling with rider who cannot be left unattended for a brief time on a RTA Mobility vehicle without risk to themselves or others.
- Assisting a rider who travels with a service animal but cannot board or disembark that animal from the vehicle without assistance.
- If a rider needs additional assistance. All riders have the right to travel with one personal care assistant (PCA) and should indicate their intent to do so when making a reservation. Depending on the nature and severity of one's disability, customers may require additional assistance from a PCA. Riders who cannot travel safely or comfortably without being accompanied by or met by a PCA must understand that RTA Mobility drivers cannot fulfill PCA duties

## **RTA Mobility: Transporting Children**

RTA Mobility does not provide safety car seats for children. Children six (6) years old or younger weighing less than 60 pounds must be secured with a child car seat. The parents or legal guardian is required to provide a child car seat when traveling. Rider is required to secure the child-car-seat, RTA driver will check the child-car-seat to ensure that it is secure properly or assists rider to secure child car seat. The child car seat must be removed from vehicle at the end of trip. Children who are certified to ride RTA Mobility must travel with an adult (Parents/Legal Guardian at all times); such information must be recorded in the system for safety and legal purposes.

## **Transporting riders with life support equipment**

Riders may bring a respirator, portable oxygen or other life/aid support equipment as long as it does not violate hazardous material transportation laws. The equipment must be small enough to fit into the vehicle and be secured. Riders must ensure that there is an adequate oxygen supply (3/4 or full) before boarding. Drivers are not authorized to operate life support equipment at any time.

## **Service animals:**

Riders may travel with a service animal, such as a guide dog or miniature horse. Snakes, birds or other exotic animals are not considered service animals under the ADA. Comfort or therapy animals, which are used solely to provide emotional support, are also not considered service animals under the ADA. Be sure to tell the reservationist when scheduling your trip that you will be traveling with a service animal. There is no fee for service animals. All service animals must be under control at all times and cannot ride on a RTA Mobility seat. All service animals can ride in an approved animal carrier or can ride on the floor at your feet. If a service animal displays any aggressive or disruptive behavior, RTA Mobility can require that the service animal be removed from the vehicle.

## **Rider Responsibilities**

- Be ready for pick-up throughout the pick-up window of the scheduled trip.
- Display your valid RTA Mobility ID Card to the driver before boarding the vehicle.
- Pay exact fare after boarding the vehicle.
- Treat drivers, other riders, and RTA Mobility staff with respect.
- Keep personal assistance devices in good condition and be able to operate without driver intervention.
- Make sure ramps, sidewalks and walkways are properly maintained and clear of snow and ice.
- Wear required vehicle seatbelts/restraints at all times during transport.
- Keep service animals under control at all times.
- Cancel reservations at least two hours before the scheduled pick-up.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke in a RTA Mobility vehicle.
- Maintain good personal hygiene.



- Do not engage in disruptive or abusive behavior.
- Provide up-to-date information to the RTA Call Center such as your home address, phone number, types of mobility aids at time or trip/s reservation.

## **Making Reasonable Accommodations**

In addition to specific transportation requirements detailed in 49 CFR Part 37, the ADA has other, more general requirements in the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) ADA regulation for public entities under Title II, Subpart A, and for private entities that offer places of public accommodation (including social service agencies and Health care providers, but excluding religious organizations) under Title III. RTA Mobility is in compliance with these requirements. RTA Mobility and other private entities are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures when such modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity. For example, a transportation service with a “no eating on the bus” policy must allow a modification of the policy in the case of an individual with Diabetes who needs to eat on a particular schedule.

## **Commendations, Suggestions, Complaints, and Questions:**

All RTA Mobility employees are train to provide a safe, reliable and courteous service. RTA Mobility always wants to hear from our riders, whether it is a compliment, suggestion, or complaint. To file a complaint or commendation regarding your RTA Mobility service, call 1-800-270-9553 option 3, option 6 or (Maryland Relay: 711) write to: RTA Mobility 8510 Corridor Rd. Suite 110 Savage, MD 20763 fax: 443-285-0050 or email: [RTAMobility@transitRTA.com](mailto:RTAMobility@transitRTA.com).

## **Rider’s Rights: ADA and GPT**

*RTA Mobility assures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities*

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act requires that no rider/person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age and disability be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the RTA Mobility Services.
- Be picked up on time, within a 30 minute window
- Be transported in a safe manner
- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- Travel in a clean, well-maintained vehicle
- Be heard and expect RTA Mobility to investigate, address and resolve concerns or complaints
- Have calls answered promptly and courteously