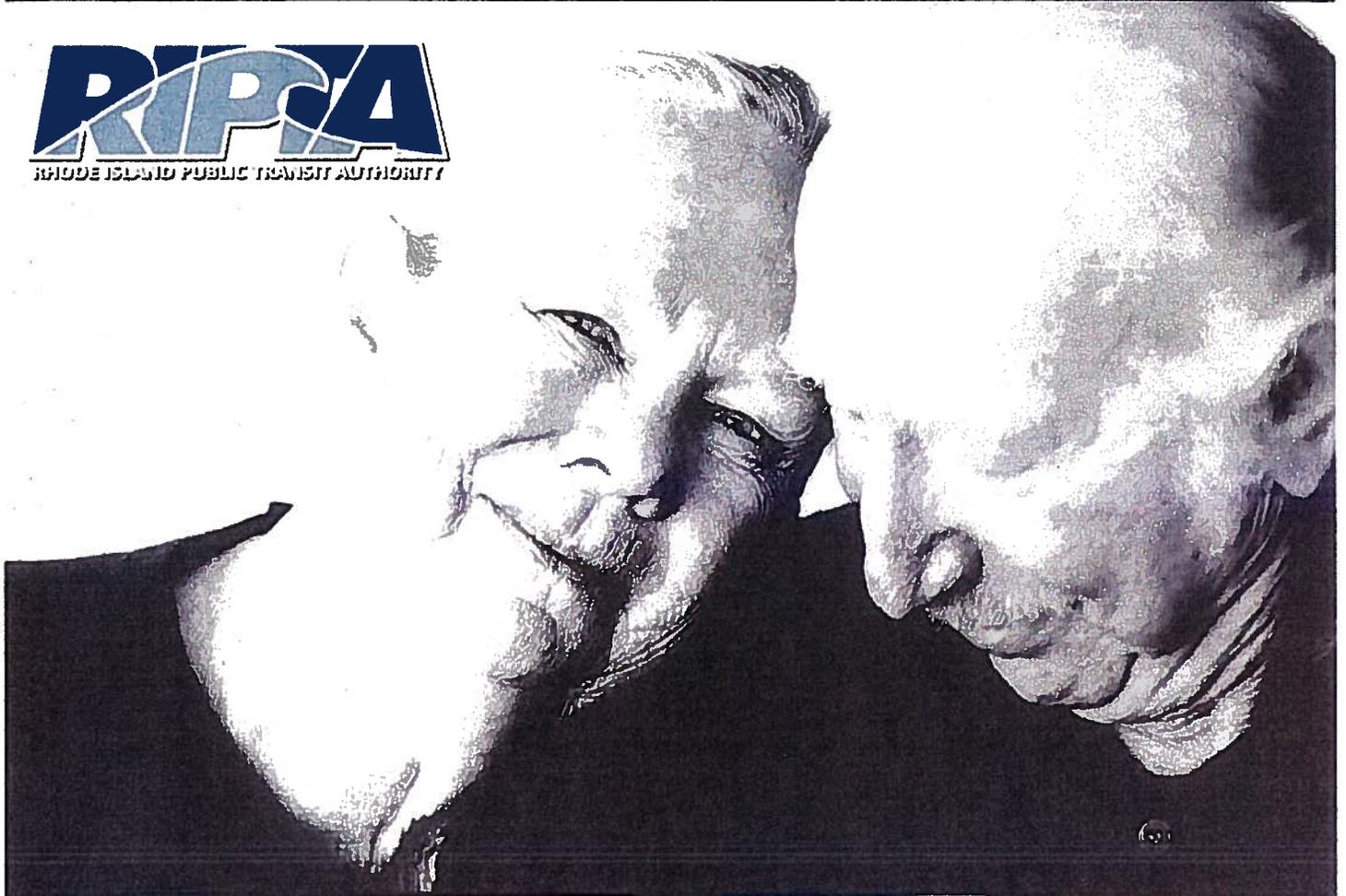


RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Bus Card and Bus Card Fee Policy for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities



SENIOR REDUCED FARE

**EXPIRES:
JAN 2009**

Expires on last day of month



JOE ROSS

e-fare

DISABLED NO FARE

**EXPIRES:
JAN 2009**

Expires on last day of month



DONALD ROSS

e-fare

DISABLED REDUCED FARE

**EXPIRES:
JAN 2009**

Expires on last day of month



JANE SMITH

e-fare

SENIOR NO FARE

**EXPIRES:
JAN 2009**

Expires on last day of month



DONALD ROSS

e-fare



The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority Administrative Policies and Procedures

BUS CARD AND BUS CARD FEE POLICY FOR SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines for the Authority's policy regarding the issuance of Bus Cards and Bus Card Fees for Seniors and for People with Disabilities.

II. POLICY OVERVIEW:

A. POLICY STATEMENT

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) has implemented programs for elderly and disabled persons in order to assist the elderly and disabled in fulfilling their transportation needs.

All persons age 65 and over are eligible for the RIPTA Bus Card for Seniors. All persons with qualifying disabilities are eligible for the RIPTA Bus Card for Individuals with Disabilities.

B. DEFINITIONS 1. Elderly Person - All persons 65 years of age {Federal Transit Act; 49CFR609} 2. Disabled Person - Those individuals who by reason of illness, injury, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability, including those who are non-ambulatory wheelchair-bound and those with semi-ambulatory capabilities, are unable without special facilities or special planning or design to utilize mass transportation facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected. {Federal Transit Act, 53 USC, Section 5307; 49CFR609.3} 3. Attendant\Escort – A person traveling as an aide, such as a personal care attendant, to facilitate travel by a person with a disability or a person age 65 or older.

III. POLICY & PROCEDURES:

A. HOW TO OBTAIN A RIPTA BUS CARD IF YOU ARE A SENIOR

1. Eligibility Requirement

A). All persons age 65 and over

2. Valid identification that includes proof of your age must be presented.
Acceptable forms of identification include *any one* of the following:

a) Medicare Card

- a) Medicare Card
- b) Birth Certificate
- c) RI Driver's License
- d) State Identification Card
- e) Passport
- f) Green Card
- g) Citizenship Papers
- h) Hospital Card, if it shows date of birth

B. HOW TO OBTAIN A RIPTA BUS CARD IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY

1. Eligibility Requirement

- All persons certified as having a disability.

2. Certification may be obtained in the following ways:

a) By showing proof that you are receiving a disability benefit. Valid identification includes any one of the following:

- Medicare Card
- Current (within the past year) Social Security Disability Award Letter, Benefit Verification Letter, or Cost of Living Adjustment Notice (Letter must indicate the individual is receiving disability benefits)
- Veteran Administration Letter with a disability rating at or above 70%, or
- Letter from Employer or Employer's Disability Insurance provider with a disability rating at or above 70%

b) By providing a letter from a Social Service Agency that certifies that you have a disability. Currently, approved organizations are:

- Easter Seals Society
- Muscular Dystrophy Association
- Multiple Sclerosis Society
- RI Hospital Hearing and Speech Center
- RI Infantile Paralysis Society
- School for the Deaf
- Services for the Blind
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- United Cerebral Palsy

C.) By completing a Reduced Fare Program for Person with Disabilities Application Form (Attachment A.) All questions on the application must be answered completely and verified by your physician/health care professional. RIPTA will notify you within 21 days of receiving your completed application whether you qualify or not.

C. ATTENDANT/ESCORT

1. Qualifying seniors and disabled persons who require another person to accompany them in order to travel on a RIPTA bus can have this attendant/escort travel with them at no charge.
2. Any person that qualifies for a bus card (either as a senior or a disabled person) may indicate the need for an attendant/escort at the time of certification. Approval may be obtained in the following ways:
 - a). Any person that qualifies for a Bus Card for disabled people where their disability either requires the person to use a wheelchair or any person that is blind or visually impaired automatically qualifies for use of an attendant. A Bus Card (in the disabled category) indicating use of an assistant will be issued automatically. *{Rhode Island General Laws 39-18-4 (7)ii+iii}*
 - b). By completing an Attendant/Escort Application Form. (Attachment A. - Pg. 3 part B.) All questions on the application must be answered completely and verified by your physician/health care professional. RIPTA will notify you within 21 days of receiving your completed application whether you qualify or not.
 - c). A revised Bus Card, indicating the use of an attendant, will be mailed to anyone who qualifies.

D. WHERE TO OBTAIN BUS CARDS FOR SENIORS AND THE DISABLED

1. RIPTA ID Office located at 1 Kennedy Plaza in Downtown Providence
2. The RIPTA Mobile Unit visits locations outside of Providence for the convenience of elderly and disabled persons who reside outside of Providence. For information regarding the location and frequency of the mobile unit site visits contact the RIPTA ID Office at 401-784-9524 or visit our website at www.ripta.com.

E. COST AND EXPIRATION DATE OF BUS CARDS FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED PEOPLE

1. New and Renewals

a) Bus Cards for SENIORS and PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Effective February 01, 2009 the Bus Card Fee is \$10.00, and will Increase \$3.75 each calendar year until January 2013, at that time the Bus Card fee will be \$25.00 for New and Renewals and will remain \$25.00 thereafter.

Calendar Year	02/01/2009 To 12/31/2009	01/01/2010 To 12/31/2010	01/01/2011 To 12/31/2011	01/01/2012 To 12/31/2012	01/01/2013 Thereafter
Cost	\$10.00	\$13.75	\$17.50	\$21.25	\$25.00

* Expiration Date - Valid for 5 years from original issue or renewal date

2. Replacement Bus Cards:

In order to obtain a replacement bus card you are required to return the damaged bus card. In the event a bus card is lost or stolen, a replacement bus card will be reissued upon notification to RIPTA. Bus Cards replacement fees for seniors and people with disabilities will be as follows:

1. \$10.00 the first replacement
2. \$15.00 the second replacement
3. \$20.00 the third replacement and thereafter

IV. RECIPROCAL ELIGIBILITY FOR OUT-OF STATE INDIVIDUALS:

- A. An out-of-state individual seeking to use RIPTA's fixed-route services may be certified by another transit system. Eligibility is presumed and reciprocal services will be provided if an individual presents certification from another transit system. In these cases a temporary (for a Disabled Person or a Senior) Bus Card will be issued, and will be valid for twenty-one days from the date of issuance. {FR 37.127}
- B. If an out-of-state individual plans to use the system beyond the twenty-one days he or she must obtain RI certification

V. PROGRAM EXEMPTIONS {Rhode Island General Laws 39-18-4(7)}:

A. The following services are not covered under the Bus Card and Fee Policy for the Senior and Disabled Bus Card Program:

1. Special Services
2. Charter Service

VI. REFUSING SERVICE:

A. Any RIPTA Bus Card for seniors or the disabled must be kept in the possession of the qualifying senior or disabled patron at all times while riding RIPTA fixed-route services.

B. The RIPTA Bus Card for Seniors or People with Disabilities must be presented when boarding RIPTA Buses.

C. RIPTA reserves the right to confiscate any Bus Card for a Senior or a Person with Disabilities that has been used improperly, e.g., utilization by another individual, or any violation of RIPTA's "Senior and Disabled Bus Card and Bus Card Fee Policy." A confiscated card will not be returned or replaced for a period of one year. After a period of 1 year, the individual or holder of a confiscated Bus Card may reapply to the Bus Card Program for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities.

D. Service for any passenger can only be refused if a rider engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct. Seriously disruptive behavior does not include behavior or appearance that only offends, annoys, or inconveniences other riders or employees. {FR 37.5(h)}

VII. POLICIES SUPERSEDED:

This policy supersedes any and all policies, and practices previously promulgated and or followed with regard to issuance of Bus Cards and Bus Card fees for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities.



**APPLICATION FORM (Form also available in Spanish)
REDUCED FARE PROGRAM FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

This application form is for people who wish to apply for disabled patron status. Individuals with disabilities that significantly limit their ability to use regular RIPTA fixed route services may be eligible to receive a disabled ID card and ride at a reduced fare.

I. WHO QUALIFIES

The Federal Transit Act, 53 USC, section 5307 defines those who qualify as follows: "Those individuals who by reason of illness, injury, age, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability, including those who are nonambulatory wheelchair-bound and those with semi-ambulatory capabilities, are unable without special facilities or special planning or design to utilize mass transportation facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected." **Financial need is not an allowable disability criterion.**

II. HOW TO OBTAIN A REDUCED FARE DISABLED ID CARD

1. Read the entire application.
2. Fill out part A of this application.
3. Take the application to your healthcare professional for certification (Part B).
4. Return completed application to the ADA Coordinator, Specialized Transportation Department, 265 Melrose Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02907, fax completed application to (401) 784-9588, or e-mail completed application to winlow@ripta.com. For additional information about this application form, read Page 2 or call (401) 784-9553, TDD RI Relay, or visit our website at www.ripta.com (under RIPTA PROGRAMS/Senior/Disabled ID Program).
5. RIPTA will notify applicant within 21 days of receiving your completed application regarding your eligibility for a Disabled ID. Applicant is required to appear in person at the ID Booth at 218 Weybosset Street for a Disabled ID.
6. If you have reached the age of 65, you qualify for a RIPTA Senior ID that offers the same fare discount as the Disabled ID. You will *not be issued a Disabled ID*.

III. WHO CAN CERTIFY

If your disability *significantly* limits your ability to use mass transportation, one of the following healthcare professionals, as appropriate to your case, may be able to certify you to qualify for a Reduced Fare Disabled ID Card (see Page 4 for guidelines):

- A licensed podiatrist can certify for Guideline 2, semi-ambulatory.
- A licensed optometrist can certify for Guideline 8, sight.
- A licensed audiologist can certify for Guideline 9, hearing.
- A certified school psychologist can certify for those applicants who are under the age of 21 years and for Guideline 14 only, neurological/mental retardation.

IV. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1. Healthcare professionals must be guided by Part C, "Guidelines for Medical Professionals," on Page 4 of this application and by the Federal Transportation Administration definition stated above in Item I.
2. RIPTA may contact the certifying healthcare professional to verify the accuracy of the information.
3. RIPTA reserves the right to make the final determination as to an applicant's eligibility.

4. The application must be filled out COMPLETELY for processing to occur.

Please Keep This Part of the Application for Future Reference Should You Need Information on the Following:

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The eligibility criteria are based on a person's need and ability to use regular RIPTA fixed route services and presumes a level of personal mobility and independence to the degree that use of regular RIPTA fixed route services would be a reasonable expectation. Financial need is *not an allowable disability criterion*.

LOCATION OF RIPTA ID OFFICE

ID cards for people with disabilities are issued at the RIPTA ID Office located at 218 Weybosset Street in Downtown Providence. The RIPTA Mobile Unit visits locations outside of Providence for the convenience of elderly and disabled persons. Call the RIPTA ID Office at (401) 784-9524, TDD RI Relay, or visit our website at www.ripta.com (under RIPTA PROGRAMS/Senior/Disabled ID Program) for information about this service.

RENEWING YOUR DISABLED ID CARD

You must apply for a new card by completing a new application and submitting it to the RIPTA ADA Coordinator. Sixty days before your ID card expires, obtain a new application by calling the RIPTA ID Office at (401) 784-9524, TDD RI Relay, or from our website at www.ripta.com (under RIPTA PROGRAMS/Senior/Disabled ID Program). The new application must be certified by one of the healthcare professionals listed on the front page of the application.

REPLACING LOST ID CARDS

In the event your ID card is lost or stolen, you may obtain a replacement. A fee of \$2.00 is charged for the first replacement, \$10.00 for the second and third one, \$15.00 for the fourth one, \$20.00 for the fifth one. No additional replacements will be issued after the fifth one before a review of the replacement history and circumstances by a RIPTA official.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR NO FARE STATUS

Any person who qualifies for a disabled ID and holds a Medical Assistance Card (Medicaid Card), automatically qualifies for "no fare" status. If you do not possess a Medicaid Card, you must go to the Department of Elderly Affairs (DEA), located at 160 Pine Street, Downtown Providence, to be certified. The State of Rhode Island's Department of Elderly Affairs establishes the income limits for a single person and married couples, and they determine if a person qualifies for "no fare" status. For verification purposes you must present the following to the DEA:

1. Letter from RIPTA which certifies eligibility for a disabled ID, and
2. Proof of income, which includes a copy of current tax return, copy of current check, and/or other documentation that denotes sources of income.

Specific questions concerning eligibility requirements must be directed to the Department of Elderly Affairs at (401) 222-2880.

If you qualify for "no fare" status, bring either your Medicaid Card or the No Fare Certification Letter from DEA, along with your certification letter from RIPTA, to the RIPTA ID Office for your disabled ID.

The Reduced Fare Disabled ID Card must be kept in the possession of the qualifying disabled patron at all times while riding RIPTA fixed route services. The Reduced Fare Disabled ID Card must be presented when boarding RIPTA buses. ID cards that are used in any other manner that is unlawful shall be confiscated.

Reduced Fare Program for People with Disabilities

PART C: GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Below are listed qualifying definitions to be used in the evaluation of candidates for the RIPTA Reduced Fare Program for Persons with Disabilities. Those conditions that are *in remission* are excluded from discount fare eligibility. Certifiers with questions concerning this program, please call (401) 785-9553.

Persons whose mobility limitations are the result of pregnancy, obesity, alcoholic or illegal drug problems are *not eligible* for this program.

1. **NON-AMBULATORY:**
Impairments that require individuals to use a wheelchair or similar device for mobility.
2. **SEMI-AMBULATORY:**
Conditions that cause individuals to use a leg brace, walker or crutches to achieve mobility.
3. **MUSCULO-SKELETAL CONDITIONS:**
Conditions such as muscular dystrophy, osteogenesis imperfecta or rheumatism restriction (rheumatoid arthritis).
4. **AMPUTATION:**
Persons who have amputation of (i.e., loss of major function due to degenerative changes associated with vascular or neurological deficits, traumatic loss of muscle mass or tendons and x-ray evidence of bony or fibrous ankylosis at an unfavorable angle, joint subluxation or instability):
 - a. Both hands; or
 - b. One hand and one foot; or
 - c. Amputation of lower extremity at or above the tarsal region (one or both legs).
5. **CEREBROVASCULAR ACCIDENT (STROKE):**
With one of the following post four-month CVA:
 - a. Pseudobulbar palsy; or
 - b. Functional motor deficit in any of two extremities.
6. **PULMONARY:**
Dyspnea occurs during such activities as climbing one flight of stairs or walking 100 yards on the level or less exertion, or even at rest. Individual may require use of portable oxygen.
7. **CARDIAC:**
Cardiac disease resulting in marked limitation of physical activity. Less than anginal physical activity causes fatigue, palpitation, dyspnea, or anginal pain. For instance, inability to walk one or more level blocks or climb one flight of ordinary stairs.
8. **SIGHT:**
Visual acuity in the better eye, after correction, is 20/200 or less; or visual field is contracted (commonly known as tunnel vision):
 - a. To 10 degrees or less from a point of fixation; or
 - b. So the widest diameter subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees.
9. **HEARING (AUDIOGRAM IS REQUIRED):**
Defined as:
 - a. Deafness or hearing incapacity that makes an individual unable to communicate or hear warning signals, including only those persons whose hearing loss is 70 dba or greater in the 500, 1000, 2000 Hz. Ranges (both ears) regardless of hearing aids.
 - b. People who rely on sign interpreters or TDD machines and are unable to comprehend normal speech.
10. **INCOORDINATION:**
Faulty coordination or palsy from brain, spinal or peripheral nerve injury and any person with a functional nerve injury or illness; or functional motor deficit in any two limbs or who suffers manifestations which significantly reduce mobility, coordination and perceptiveness not accounted for in other categories. Diagnosis must be specific
11. **CEREBRAL PALSY – SEE #10**
12. **EPILEPSY (CONVULSIVE):**
Characterized by major motor seizures (grand mal or psychomotor) substantiated by EEG and occurring more frequently than twice in the past month in spite of prescribed medication.
13. **INFANTILE AUTISM**
14. **NEUROLOGICAL/MENTAL RETARDATION:**
A syndrome characterized by learning, perceptual and/or behavioral disorders. This includes persons with severe gait problems who are restricted in mobility. Patient's condition must be a significant learning disability; diagnosis must be specific such as mental retardation. Some conditions are excluded from eligibility such as ADD and dyslexia. School psychologists can certify for neurological conditions but cannot certify any other categories.
15. **EMOTIONAL ILLNESS:**
Individuals whose mental impairment substantially limits one or more of their major life activities, resulting in limited ability to learn, work, or care for oneself. Specific diagnosis is required. The patient's disability must be chronic, severe and impede patient's ability to learn, work or care for him/herself.
16. **CHRONIC PROGRESSIVE DEBILITATING CONDITIONS: (DIAGNOSIS MUST BE SPECIFIC):**
Individuals who experience chronic and progressive debilitating diseases that are characterized by constitutional symptoms such as fatigue, weakness, weight loss, pain, and changes in mental status that, taken together, interfere in the activities of daily living and significantly impair mobility. Such disorders include:
 - a. Progressive and uncontrollable malignancies (i.e., terminal malignancies or neoplasms being treated with aggressive radiation or chemotherapy).
 - b. Advanced connective tissue diseases (i.e., advanced stages of disseminated lupus erythematosus, scleroderma, or polyarteritis nodosa).
 - c. Symptomatic HIV infection (i.e., AIDS or ARC) in CDC-defined Clinical Group IV, Subgroups A-E.