



## Contact Us

Ride: (401) 461-9760  
RIPTA: (401) 781-9400  
[Ride@ripta.com](mailto:Ride@ripta.com)  
[RIPTA.com/Ride](http://RIPTA.com/Ride)



# Ride ADA Paratransit User Guide

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# Welcome to RIPTA RIdE ADA Paratransit

RIdE complementary ADA Paratransit is a service for people who are unable to use Rhode Island Public Transit Authority's (RIPTA) fixed-route service due to a disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires public transit agencies to provide paratransit service to eligible people with disabilities that is comparable to fixed-route service.

RIdE ADA paratransit service is comparable to RIPTA fixed-route service in several ways. RIdE:

- Is a shared-ride public transportation service. The van may pick up or drop off other customers while en route to a destination.
- Is offered at the same times and in the same locations as RIPTA's regular fixed-route service. (Note: The RIdE Anywhere premium service now serves locations within Rhode Island beyond the ADA service area).
- Offers comparable travel times to fixed-route service, including the time it would take to transfer and get to or from bus stops.
- Cannot restrict trip purpose.
- May drop passengers off early so that they are on time for an appointment.
- Provides the same level of driver oversight of passengers as fixed-route bus service. All drivers are required to drive safely and ensure that passengers are not disruptive or harmful to others. Drivers are not required to provide custodial care or to wait with individuals once they arrive at their destination.

## The RIdE Program

The RIdE program provides complementary ADA paratransit service through pre-scheduled door-to-door trips.

In addition to complementary ADA paratransit service, the RIdE program also provides other transportation services with different eligibility and service standards. The service described in this guide primarily applies to RIdE's ADA paratransit service and may reference those other services.

## RIdE Anywhere Program

RIdE customers are also eligible for the premium RIdE Anywhere program, made permanent by the Rhode Island General Assembly, which allows them to request curb-to-curb paratransit trips to and from locations within Rhode Island beyond the ¾-mile ADA service area. Participants must complete the standard RIdE paratransit application and be approved to use the service. FTA-required ADA paratransit trips are prioritized over premium trips.

## Definitions

**ADA Service Area:** RIdE complementary ADA paratransit service is provided within ¾-mile of a regular fixed-route. Express commuter routes do not have an ADA paratransit service area. The ¾-mile distance is determined by the actual distance between two points, not by driving directions. A trip is only eligible for ADA service if it both starts and ends within this service area.

**Customer Service Agent (CSA):** CSA is the term used at RIdE for the person assisting customers by phone.

**Fixed-Route Service:** Transit service that operates on a schedule and along set routes.

**No Shows:** A passenger is considered a No Show if they schedule a trip and do not cancel it at least 2 hours before the start of the pick-up window.

**Ready-Time Window:** Passengers are given a ready-time window instead of a set time. For example, you may be told that your pick-up will be between 9:00 AM and 9:20 AM. The trip is considered on time if the RIdE van arrives at any time within this window.

**RIdE Anywhere Service:** This premium program allows RIdE paratransit customers to request trips to and from locations within Rhode Island that are beyond the ADA service area. To comply with federal guidelines, RIPTA must prioritize ADA trips.

## Topics

- Using RIdE ADA Paratransit Service
- RIdE Trip Considerations
- Responsibilities
- Suspension of Service
- Input and Feedback

# Using Ride ADA Paratransit Service

## Where to Call for Ride Program Reservations and Where's My Ride

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Call Ride: (401) 461-9760. The Ride Customer Service Department is open from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Saturday.

Outside of these hours, when you call (401) 461-9760, you will have the option to either leave a message or follow the phone prompts to be connected to a Paratransit Dispatcher.

## RIPTA Ride Mobile Application

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Ride has a new free mobile application (app) available in the Apple store and Google Play store. Search "RIPTA Ride—MTM Go" to download the app.

There is no need to enroll; all customers can use the app if they know their Ride customer ID number and year of birth.

To log in you will need:

- Agency code: RIPTA
- Ride Customer ID #
- Password: 4-digit year of birth

The app enables Ride customers to:

- Request one-way or round-trip reservations up to 14 days in advance to locations they've previously visited. (These trips are considered pending until Ride customer service approves them).
- Add a guest or Personal Care Attendant to a trip.
- Modify or cancel trips.
- Track trips in real time using GPS and view estimated arrival times.

## Scheduling a Trip on Ride Paratransit

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### Requesting a Ride Trip by Phone

If calling Ride at (401) 461-9760 to reserve a paratransit trip, customers must call at least the day before.

Reservations are accepted Monday through Saturday between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM and on Sundays between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM, via a voicemail message.

Ride reservations and schedule changes cannot be made after-hours by phone.

When calling to reserve a ride, please have the following information ready:

- Either your Ride customer ID number or your phone number.
- Your home address.
- Pick-up address, including street number, street name, building name (such as "ABC Medical Clinic" or "Bank RI"), suite number (if known), and ZIP Code.
- Your desired pick-up or appointment time. You can request either a pick-up or drop-off (appointment) time, not both.
- Your requested return time, if you are scheduling a round trip.
- Where you want to go, including the street address and ZIP Code for your destination. Alert the CSA if you are scheduling a trip with multiple stops. Each stop is a new ADA trip requiring its own reservation and fare.
- If you will be using a wheelchair or other mobility device.
- If you will have a service animal with you.
- If you will be accompanied by a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) and/or any companion.
- If you plan to use a personal Wave account to pay for the trip.
- Any other information the Ride driver should have to help you travel in a safe and timely manner.

**Note: Ride has a 20-minute drop-off window around your selected time. To ensure you arrive at your destination on time, choose a drop-off about 10 minutes earlier than needed. Example: If you select 7:50 AM, your drop-off window will be 7:40–8:00 AM.**

When you call to schedule your ride, the CSA may need to ask you to change your requested time. The ADA allows Ride to negotiate up to one hour before or after your requested time. However, if you provide a fixed appointment time, we will only negotiate up to one hour before your requested time to ensure an on-time arrival. You must make all schedule changes with the CSA. You may not ask the driver to change your return trip, place, or time.

If you are traveling to an appointment, tell the CSA what time you must arrive at your destination, allowing at least ten minutes before the appointment time for unexpected delays. This allows Ride to determine an appropriate

pick-up time for you. Please remember that all service is shared-ride, meaning others may be riding in the vehicle with you. Please anticipate stops for other passengers to get on and off. A Ride paratransit trip takes approximately the same amount of time as a trip on a regular fixed-route RIPTA bus, including time for transfers. Ride service is not designed to follow a direct route between your pick-up and drop-off locations.

### **Requesting a Trip Using the Ride App**

To request a trip, log into the RIPTA Ride—MTM Go app at least two days in advance, enter your starting point, destination, and desired arrival or pick-up time. Ride will review your request within 24 hours and confirm approval.

### **Subscription Trips (Standing Orders)**

You may request subscription service by calling Ride at (401) 461-9760 if you travel to and from the same place on the same day(s) of the week, at least once weekly. Once subscription service is scheduled, you only need to call when you wish to cancel or change the trip for a particular day(s). You may not book subscription trips through the RIPTA Ride—MTM Go app.

### **Holiday Service**

If you need a ride on a holiday, please call Ride no earlier than one week before the holiday to schedule or confirm your trip. Trips scheduled more than one week in advance of a holiday, including standing orders, will automatically be canceled.

### **Same-Day Trip Requests & Changes**

When requesting a trip by phone, you must call at least the day before you wish to travel. Same day trip requests are not accepted. If you call on the day of service to request a modification (such as a change in pick-up or drop-off time or address), Ride will attempt to accommodate the change but cannot guarantee it.

### **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)**

The IVR is an automated phone system that allows customers to obtain pick-up times and review or cancel pending scheduled trips. Customers can choose the IVR option that best meets their needs.

#### **Option 1: AUTOMATED CALL OUT NOTIFICATIONS**

- Calls go out daily at 6:00 PM for customers with pending next day trips. Ask your CSA to enroll you in this option.

#### **Option 2: AUTOMATED TEXT NOTIFICATIONS**

- Texts go out daily at 6:00 PM for customers with pending next day trips. Ask your CSA to enroll you in this option.

#### **Option 3: 24 HOUR AUTOMATED CALL IN SYSTEM**

- There is no need to enroll.
- Customers can call the IVR by dialing (401) 461-9760 and selecting option 2.
- Customers will need to enter their customer number and year of birth for verification. If you need your customer number, ask your CSA.

### **When Do You Need To Be Ready?**

The Ride van will arrive any time within a 20-minute ready-time window. For example, if your ready-time window is between 9:00 AM and 9:20 AM, the vehicle can arrive any time between 9:00 AM and 9:20 AM. Please be ready to board the vehicle immediately upon arrival. This helps to ensure better on-time performance that benefits all riders.

The vehicle will wait 5 minutes when it arrives within the 20-minute ready-time window to allow you adequate time to board. If you have not boarded the vehicle within the 5-minute period, your vehicle will leave and you will be considered a No Show. Riders can check their ready-time window through the RIPTA Ride—MTM Go app or through the IVR system.

### **Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures**

- Ride complementary ADA paratransit service is comparable to RIPTA's fixed-route public transit service, so, as with bus service, you may arrive at your destination early. Under ADA paratransit service, the Ride driver will not wait with you if a building is not yet open or someone is not available to meet you.
- When you call to reserve a ride, the CSA will enter the requested pick-up time or appointment time. Your actual pick-up and drop-off times will be determined by the final schedule for all trips that day.
- You will receive an automated reminder call the night before your scheduled trip with the ready-time window provided you have enrolled in call out IVR. You can also check scheduled trip times any time of day using the automated phone system, by calling the Ride program during normal business hours, or by checking the RIPTA Ride—MTM Go app.

- You should be ready to board the vehicle within the 20-minute ready-time window.
- On occasion, a driver may arrive early due to cancellations or lighter than average traffic. The driver cannot leave until the start of the pick-up window. You have the choice to leave early or to have the driver wait until the start of the window.
- To avoid a No Show, you must acknowledge the driver's arrival and board the vehicle within five minutes. If the driver does not see you upon arriving at the designated pick-up point, the driver will attempt to locate you or will have a dispatcher call you. If the driver has arrived within the pick-up window and cannot locate you, you will be marked a No Show and the driver will be directed to go on to the next scheduled pick-up.
- There is no guarantee that a vehicle can be sent back for you up after a No Show. Priority is given to riders on the schedule.
- When you board, be prepared to verify your name and pay the fare or confirm that funds should be deducted from your Wave account.
- Drivers must stay within sight of their vehicles. A driver cannot escort you past the ground floor lobby door of any building. Drivers are not permitted to enter private residences.

### **Helpful Tips:**

- You do not have to board the vehicle before the beginning of your 20-minute window.
- A driver who arrives within the ready-time window or later will wait five minutes. If a driver arrives early, they will wait until the start of the ready-time window before listing you as a No Show and moving on to the next pick-up.
- You will not be considered a No Show if you refuse a ride that arrived later than the 20-minute window.
- If the RIdE vehicle has not arrived by the end of the 20-minute window, you can call RIdE's "Where's My Ride" at (401) 461-9760 to report a late pick-up and obtain further assistance.
- If your ride is more than 30 minutes late, we encourage you to call the RIdE Program at (401) 461-9760 to file a complaint.
- If you use medication, we suggest you carry it with you in case your trip is delayed.

### **Travel Time**

A RIdE complementary ADA paratransit trip should take about the same amount of time as a trip on a fixed-route

RIPTA bus, including time for transfers and to get to and from bus stops.

### **Fares**

ADA paratransit service charges a fare of twice the fixed-route fare, \$4.00 per one-way trip. Companions must pay the same fare as the eligible RIdE customer. If the customer is using Wave fare payment, the companion must pay separately. Personal Care Assistants (PCA) ride free. Both PCAs and companions must start and end their travel at the same address as the eligible rider

Riders have several payment options and are required to pay the driver upon boarding:

- For riders paying with cash; only exact change is accepted. Drivers cannot make change.
- RIdE tickets may be purchased wherever RIPTA fare products are sold or on [RIPTA.com](http://RIPTA.com).
- Riders using the Wave smart fare system must call RIdE to link their Wave account number to their customer account before they schedule trips. They may choose Wave payment when requesting a trip by phone. If requesting a trip through the mobile app, a rider who wishes to use Wave fare payment must call RIdE in advance to select that option. Each Wave account belongs to an individual rider and cannot cover others' payments.
- When paying with Wave, RIdE customers must have adequate funds loaded onto their Wave accounts before their trip.
- Wave accounts offer fare capping, meaning that customers who use Wave will never pay more than \$12 in a day and \$140 in a month for RIdE trips.

RIdE ADA paratransit fares are subject to change. At least one passenger must always pay a full fare, including adults traveling as a non-paying child's PCA.

## **RIdE Trip Considerations**

### **Personal Care Attendants (PCA)**

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone you may bring with you to assist you while traveling or with personal care or activities.

One PCA may ride free when traveling with you. You must tell RIdE that your PCA is traveling with you when

you schedule your ride, or any time before 4:30 PM the day before your ride. This ensures that there will be room on the vehicle for you, your PCA, and other scheduled riders. A PCA must get on and off the van at the same place and time as you. Drivers cannot add riders who do not have a reservation, so if you do not make a reservation for your PCA, they will not be allowed to ride with you.

## **Cancellations and No Shows**

You should cancel a ride through the RIPTA Ride—MTM Go app or by calling Ride as soon as you know you do not need it. You will be considered a No Show if you:

- Cancel your ride less than two hours before the scheduled ready-time window or refuse the trip upon arrival of the Ride vehicle.
- Reserve a ride but fail to meet the vehicle upon its arrival.
- Are not ready to board the vehicle within five minutes of its arrival time (when it has arrived within the ready-time window).

Penalties may include suspension and loss of subscription service if you develop a pattern of excessive No Shows and/or late cancellations. Ride considers it a pattern when No Shows total 15% or more of a customer's total trips in a rolling 30-day period.

If you are a No Show for a ride, your other scheduled trips for that day will not be automatically cancelled. It is the rider's responsibility to cancel all rides they no longer need.

## **Excessive Trip Cancellations**

Please do not schedule a trip simply to reserve space on a vehicle for possible use and then cancel the trip. A pattern of excessive cancellations could result in a warning, and if you continue, could result in suspension of service.

## **Seat Belts and Wheelchair Securement**

All riders must wear lap and shoulder belts as required by Rhode Island motor vehicle laws. If you use a wheelchair to ride on the bus, your wheelchair will be secured in the vehicle via a four-point tie-down system. We may refuse to transport you if you do not allow your wheelchair to be properly secured prior to transport.

## **Mobility Devices & Wheelchairs**

Passengers may use mobility devices – such as canes, walkers, and wheelchairs – on Ride ADA paratransit

service. If you transfer to a seat, the driver will assist you with proper and safe storage of your mobility device. You must be able to transfer yourself or have your PCA help; the driver cannot help you.

All Ride vehicles are equipped with passenger lifts that meet ADA specifications. They will accommodate mobility devices such as wheelchairs and three-wheeled scooters up to 48" by 30", with a gross weight of up to 800 pounds, including the passenger. Mobility devices that exceed these standards may not be transportable. If your device is larger than these dimensions or has features that may affect its securement, please call the Ride program and speak to a manager about having your mobility device evaluated for use on Ride vehicles.

If you need to use the lift to board a vehicle, the driver will assist you. You may also board the vehicle while standing on the lift. For your safety, please be sure that your wheelchair or other mobility device is properly maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specification. Ride may refuse to transport any mobility device that is not properly maintained and could pose a hazard to you, the driver, or to our equipment.

## **Transporting Life-Support Equipment**

You may bring a respirator, portable oxygen, and/or other life-supporting equipment; this equipment must not violate laws or rules regarding transportation of hazardous materials. Equipment must be of an appropriate size to fit in our paratransit vehicles and be under the rider or assistant's continuous control.

## **Transporting Packages**

Drivers do not assist with packages. Passengers should limit their packages to what they can carry on and off the vehicle in one trip. For the safety of all riders, you may not transport explosives, acids, flammable liquids, or other hazardous or illegal materials.

## **Transporting Children**

- Children age 5 and older may travel alone if able to ride independently.
- Registered child riders pay full fare and follow all rider rules.
- Children traveling as companions pay full fare.
- Children age 5 and under ride free with a fare-paying adult.
- If the adult is a PCA, the adult must pay fare.

## **Transporting Animals**

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You may travel with a service animal such as a guide dog who is trained to assist an individual with a disability. When you request a ride, tell the CSA that you will be traveling with a service animal. A service animal must be under the constant control of its owner or handler.

## **Transport Locations**

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RIde does not serve locations that are unsafe for our paratransit vehicles (for example, dangerous double parking, required backing up of the vehicle, low hanging branches, snowbanks, or the absence of a safe area for you to board or depart). In such cases, arrangements may be made for an alternative pick-up or drop-off location.

## **Emergency Procedures**

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In the event of an accident or emergency, please remain calm and follow the driver's instructions.

**Personal Medical Issues** - A rider who becomes ill, or notices another rider who may be ill, should immediately inform the driver. Drivers are not trained to provide medical assistance and are required to notify RIde's Dispatch Center for instruction.

**Health and/or Safety** - If a rider cannot be left alone, and the person meeting them is not at the location when the driver arrives, the rider will be transported back to the RIde office (or to another safe location). The rider's guardian or caregiver will be notified and required to come to pick up the rider or to make other transportation arrangements. If we are unable to make contact with the guardian or caregiver, the proper authorities will be notified. Respite care charges may be assessed to the rider if a pattern occurs.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

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RIde reserves the right to suspend, modify or cancel service during times of bad weather conditions that may jeopardize the safety of our riders, our employees, or our vehicles, such as snow, ice, wind, or heavy rain. On bad weather days, call RIde to determine whether we will be able to safely pick you up. The scheduling office will also be able to tell you if service will be cancelled.

Also, if you are traveling during inclement weather, be prepared for longer ride times. For example, bring any medication you may need; if you use oxygen, bring an

extra supply; if you are diabetic or hypoglycemic, bring a snack with you.

# **Responsibilities**

These responsibilities ensure safety and comfort for passengers and drivers.

## **Rider Responsibilities**

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- Carefully read the RIde ADA Paratransit User Guide and related materials.
- Make trip reservations at least one day in advance.
- Be ready at the designated pick-up location on time, at the beginning of the ready-time window.
- If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the ready-time window, call RIde.
- Call to cancel an unneeded ride as soon as possible to avoid a No Show.
- If using cash, pay the correct fare in exact change. Remember, drivers cannot make change.
- If using Wave payment, load adequate funds onto your Wave account before you schedule your trip.
- Wear seat belts at all times during transport.
- Avoid distracting the driver or other passengers with inappropriate behavior.
- Maintain wheelchairs or other mobility aids in safe operating condition according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- Expect shared-ride service on RIde vans. Others may be picked up after you, and/or dropped off before you reach your destination.
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene. Please refrain from using scented products.
- Follow these common rules of courtesy:
  - No eating, drinking, or smoking on board the vehicle.
  - No riding under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
  - No littering in the vehicle.
  - No radios, audible music players, or other sound-generating equipment may be played aloud.
- Provide feedback to the RIde program when your service is unsatisfactory by calling (401) 461-9760, or by emailing us at [RIde@ripta.com](mailto:RIde@ripta.com).
- When contacting RIde, be considerate and have all necessary information ready.

## Driver Responsibilities

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Drivers must:

- Drive safely at all times.
- Treat riders with courtesy and respect.
- Wear a proper uniform.
- Visibly display a proper RIPTA ID badge.
- Keep to the assigned service schedule for the convenience of all riders.
- Provide reasonable assistance to riders entering or leaving the vehicle.
- When requested, and if safe to do so, assist passengers to and from the main door of their origin or destination.
- Adhere to the same standards of common courtesy and personal hygiene as those required of riders.

**Assistance includes but is not limited to:**

- Offering ambulatory passengers steadying arms or other appropriate assistance when walking or using stairs.
- Helping people using wheelchairs maneuver onto standard ramps and to or from the main door of their origin and destination.
- Guiding people who are visually impaired to and from the main door of their origin and destination.

**Drivers are not permitted to:**

- Enter the residence of a rider.
- Perform any personal care assistance for any rider, such as assisting with dressing.
- Lift or carry a passenger.
- Assist a rider using a wheelchair up or down any interior or exterior steps.
- Wait for a passenger to make a stop to conduct business, such as at an ATM/cash machine or pharmacy.
- Perform errands for riders, such as picking up prescriptions or groceries.
- Escort a passenger beyond the ground floor lobby of a public building or beyond the front door of a private residence.
- Accept tips or any other gratuities.
- Use personal cell phones, radios, or other sound generating devices while on duty.

## What Personal (Disability) Information Will the Driver Know?

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The RIde driver receives information about the paratransit trips they will provide each day through a manifest uploaded onto their tablet. The manifest provides the following information:

- Each rider's name, pick-up address, ready window details and destination address.
- If you are traveling with a PCA and/or companion for that trip.
- If you are traveling with a service animal.
- The type of mobility device you are using for today's trip (manual or power wheelchair, etc.).

Specific personal information about a disability is not provided on the manifest without advance permission. From time to time, specific information may be necessary for safety purposes or to assure effective communication between the rider and driver. For example, a manifest may note if a rider cannot be left unattended; if a rider is deaf and communicates by reading lips or writing notes; or if a rider is non-verbal and will respond to conversation with the driver by nodding his/her head or using a speech board.

Call the RIde Customer Service Department to discuss personal information you want to add to a manifest.

## Suspension of Service

The RIde Program uses progressive discipline to curb misuse, abuse, and inappropriate and/or illegal behavior while protecting riders' rights. Suspension from RIde ADA paratransit service can result when a rider:

- Obtains or uses paratransit service under false pretenses; for example, providing false information on the eligibility application or allowing others to ride in your place.
- Incurs an excessive pattern of verified No Shows or trip cancellations.
- Engages in abusive or disruptive behavior (for example, threatening drivers, program staff or other riders with physical harm), or engages in illegal behavior while on board our vehicles (e.g., sale/purchase of illegal drugs, crime of any nature, etc.).
- Engages in any behavior having a racist or sexual connotation with the driver or other riders.
- Illegally sells, misuses, or transfers RIPTA fare products to another person, including a driver.

Fails to meet general rules, policies or responsibilities resulting in disruptive or unsafe conditions for our drivers, equipment or fellow passengers.

The RIde disciplinary process progresses from warnings to suspension, depending on the behavior.

- A rider may be warned first by a telephone call from a RIde program staff member.
- If the behavior or action continues, the rider will receive a written warning with an explanation of the violation.
- Finally, if the behavior continues unchanged, the RIde program will notify the rider of a pending suspension.

Suspensions can be immediate when the behavior is illegal or potentially compromises the safety of a driver, other riders, or our equipment.

A rider is allowed to appeal the suspension or proposed suspension. When suspended, RIPTA will provide the rider with a full written explanation of this process. Any rider may also request this full description.

## **Appeal of Suspension**

A customer (or customer's representative) may file a verbal or written appeal of a termination or suspension of ADA service by contacting the RIde program.

Appeal requests will be forwarded to RIPTA's legal office for review. RIPTA's legal office will decide to uphold or dismiss a pending service suspension within 10 days. Service will continue while the outcome of a No Show appeal is decided.

# **Input and Feedback**

## **Complaints and Compliments**

We encourage you to contact the RIde program to let us know when you receive exceptional service or to file a formal complaint. You may do so via:

- E-mail: [RIde@ripta.com](mailto:RIde@ripta.com)
- RIPTA's website: [RIPTA.com/contact](http://RIPTA.com/contact)
- Phone: (401) 461-9760
- Mail:  
RIde Customer Service  
705 Elmwood Avenue  
Providence, RI 02907

Please provide as much detail as possible, including date and time of pick-up or drop-off, vehicle number, and driver name. The more information you include, the better we can research your complaint or pass along your compliment. We will follow up on your complaint and respond to you, usually within 10 days. Anonymous compliments and complaints also are accepted.

## **Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee**

The Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) is an advisory body for riders, social service agency representatives, and others to provide input into all RIPTA services, including the RIde paratransit program. The ATAC meets regularly to discuss and provide input to RIPTA. Visit [RIPTA.com/ATAC](http://RIPTA.com/ATAC) for details.