



ROCKFORD *ParaTransit*

GUIDE TO RIDE



EFFECTIVE: May 2018

(This Guide Replaces ALL Preceding Guide to Ride Documents)

SERVING:

Rockford • Loves Park • Machesney Park • Belvidere

815.961.2255

www.rmtd.org

ROCKFORD PARATRANSIT – *YOUR GUIDE TO RIDE*

Dear Customer:

On the behalf of the Rockford Mass Transit Board of Directors and our staff, I would like to welcome you to Rockford Paratransit.

Rockford Paratransit serves the needs of our certified residents who, because of a disability, are unable to use RMTD's regular fixed route service, and who meet the criteria established by the U.S. Department of Transportation under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Throughout this guide, you will find helpful, customer-friendly information regarding:

How to Become Certified
How to Ride Paratransit

Reserving Your Ride
Policies and Conduct

All of us at RMTD sincerely hope this Guide-To-Ride answers any questions you may have. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to call Rockford Paratransit at (815) 961-2255. We welcome your concerns and comments. Thank you.

Best regards,

Michael Stubbe

Michael Stubbe
Executive Director
Rockford Mass Transit
Rockford Paratransit



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How Do I Become Certified?

The first step is to come to the offices of Rockford Mass Transit, 520 Mulberry St, 2nd floor and fill out the Rockford Paratransit application in person. If you do not have a way to get to our downtown office, you may schedule a complimentary, round trip ride with Rockford Paratransit for this purpose by calling 818.961.2255. For persons with hearing impairments, RMTD encourages the use of Illinois Relay Works. To use this service, simply dial 711, or 1-800-526-0844 and work with the Communications Assistant to complete the call to Rockford Paratransit.

Completed applications will be reviewed within 21 days of receipt. Once reviewed, Rockford Paratransit will notify the applicant in writing of the determination of eligibility. If Rockford Paratransit has not made a determination on eligibility within 21 days, the applicant will be treated as eligible and provided service. If Rockford Paratransit denies the application, an opportunity to file an appeal will be given.

To ride Rockford Paratransit, you must be certified as eligible by Rockford Paratransit. Examples of people who may be eligible are those who, because of a disability, are unable to:

- Board, ride, or disembark from an accessible bus
- Persons unable to use the fixed route system due to visual or mental impairments
- Persons unable to reach boarding locations or situations due to a specific impairment related conditions.

There are other considerations in determining eligibility; however, these conditions alone do not guarantee eligibility. These conditions are:

- Age, distance to a stop or illiteracy by themselves are not considered a disability but may be considered in the determination.
- People who are visually impaired may be eligible if they cannot use the RMTD fixed route system.
- People with medical conditions such as epilepsy, kidney disorders, diabetes, may be eligible depending upon their ability to use the RMTD fixed route system.

Provisional Paratransit Eligibility:

Any person can apply for and may be granted provisional paratransit eligibility for paratransit services if they can provide a physician's certificate demonstrating that they have a hypersensitivity to extreme weather conditions or that extreme weather adversely affects or limits their mobility.

Temporary Paratransit Eligibility:

The following individuals are ADA temporary Paratransit eligible if they meet the following criteria:

1. Any person can apply for, and be granted, temporary Paratransit eligibility, if they meet the Paratransit eligibility criteria as listed above, and is determined temporary Paratransit eligible by Rockford Paratransit.

How To Appeal A Decision?

Applicants whose requests for certification are denied have the right to an appeal. An Appeals Board, appointed by RAMPCIL, will review each appeal request. To file an appeal applicants must:

- Present a written appeal to the Rockford Paratransit Appeal Board. It may be mailed to 520 Mulberry Street or presented in person at the same address. It must be filed within 60 days of the denial of an individual's application
- Applicants will be given an opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments to the Appeals Board.
- Written notification of the final decision and justification will be mailed to the applicant.

Rockford Paratransit will not provide Paratransit service to the individual pending the determination on appeal. However, if Rockford Paratransit has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, Rockford Paratransit will provide service from the 31st day of appeal until a decision is reached.

Reserving Your Ride

Service Area:

The Rockford Paratransit service area is equivalent to RMTD's fixed route system. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, service is available within 3/4 mile corridor of the fixed route system and/or jurisdictional boundary for the communities it serves including Loves Park, Machesney Park and Belvidere. Rockford Paratransit will not provide paratransit service in any area outside of these jurisdictional boundaries. If there are questions about the service area, please contact Rockford Paratransit @ (815) 961.2255 or use the Illinois Relay Works System.

Service Hours:

Hours of operation for Rockford are Monday thru Friday, 5:15 A.M. to 11:45 P.M. Hours of operation for Loves Park and Machesney Park, Monday thru Friday are 5:30 A.M. until 10:00 P.M. Saturday service hours in Rockford are 6:00 A.M. to 7:10 P.M. Saturday hours in Loves Park and Machesney Park are from 6:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M. Sunday hours in Rockford are 8:15 A.M. to 5:15 P.M. There is no paratransit service on Sundays in Loves Park or Machesney Park. Belvidere service is provided Monday thru Friday from 8:00 A.M. until 4:30 P.M. There is no paratransit service in Belvidere at night or on the weekends.

Whom Do I Call?

To schedule a ride or for information you may call one of our Schedulers at (815) 961-2255 or use Illinois Relay Works by dialing 711 or 1.800.526.0844. For information on your night ride only, after 6:30 P.M. call: (815) 961-2250. Information on Rockford Paratransit service is available in accessible formats upon request by calling (815) 961-2255.

Reservation Hours:

To schedule a ride with Rockford Paratransit call (815) 961-2255 or Illinois Relay Works, Monday - Saturday between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Sunday reservation hours are between 9:15 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Rockford Paratransit shall make reservation service available during at least all normal business hours of the entity's administrative offices, as well as during times comparable to normal business hours on a day when Rockford Paratransit offices are not open before a service day.

NOTE: NO CHANGE MAY BE MADE TO A RESERVATION AFTER 5:00 P.M. THE DAY BEFORE YOUR TRIP.

What Do I Need To Know When Scheduling A Ride?

The following suggestions will help when scheduling your ride:

1. If at all possible, please do not wait until the last minute to make a reservation.
2. When making a reservation, please remember to schedule your return trip at the same time.
3. Please be ready to provide the following information when making your reservation:
 - your name
 - the date you want to be picked up at your point of origin
 - your pick up address or point of origin
 - the address of your destination
 - the time you would like to arrive at your destination
 - the time you would like to be picked up for your return trip
 - whether you use a wheelchair or other mobility device
 - if a personal assistant will be riding with you. If so, there is no charge.
 - if a companion will be riding with you. If so, his/her fare is \$3.00 cash for each trip
 - for safety reasons, the paratransit rider must provide an infant seats for all children under the age of 5.

How Do I Cancel A Reservation?

- To cancel a reservation, please call (815) 961-2255, or use Illinois Relay by dialing 711. Rockford Paratransit would appreciate at least a 1-day notice, but please call no later than two hours before your scheduled trip.
- If you do not give notice and you do not take the trip reserved, this could be considered a no show. Your service may be suspended due to an excessive amount of no shows.
- For more information on our No Show Policy, please call (815) 961.2255 or visit our website at www.rmtd.org.



ROCKFORD ParaTransit

How Do I Ride Rockford Paratransit?

Riding Rockford Paratransit is equivalent to riding RMTD's fixed route system. There is a scheduled arrival time and you must be ready when the vehicle arrives. The driver will only wait only five (5) minutes for you to board. When scheduling a ride, our scheduler will give you a timeframe to expect your vehicle. As our service is a shared ride service, please note that there may be additional stops before reaching your destination.

Please Remember The Following:

- Once eligible for the service, you may ride from any origin in the Rockford Paratransit service area for any purpose as long as a reservation has been made.
- The vehicle is allowed to arrive one hour and fifteen minutes prior to the time you scheduled to arrive at your destination. For example, if you are scheduled to be dropped off at 8:00 a.m., you must be ready to leave by 6:45 a.m. The vehicle may arrive anytime thereafter.
- Our service is an origin to destination service.
- Drivers may assist passengers upon request.
- We require the driver to collect a fare of \$3.00 cash or a Rockford Paratransit ticket from you and your companion before departure. Please have exact change ready. We do not accept personal checks. Drivers DO NOT carry change.
- Personal assistants are allowed to ride for free if such a need is indicated on your Rockford Paratransit application.
- Before departure, the driver will:
 1. Secure your wheelchair
 2. Fasten your seat belt and shoulder strap
- For the comfort, safety and cleanliness of the vehicle, eating, drinking, chewing tobacco and smoking are not permitted.
- When being picked up from your drop off location, the driver has a fifteen minute window to arrive from you time scheduled. If your driver has not arrived during the allotted time, please call Rockford Paratransit @ 815.961.2255.

Fares:

The fare for Rockford Paratransit is \$3.00 for each one-way trip. A zone fare of \$.50 is required for each passenger to any destination in Cherry Valley. A "10-ride Paratransit book" may be purchased from RMTD for \$30.00. To purchase a 10-Ride book you may:

- Visit either the RMTD Passenger Terminal at 501 W. State Street, Monday - Friday between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. Saturday between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 5:30 P.M. Sunday between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. or the East Side Terminal at 725 Lyford Road between 6:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M, Monday thru Friday.
- Mail a \$30.00 check or money order payable to: Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD), 520 Mulberry Street, Rockford, Illinois 61101.

Ticket order forms and mailing envelopes are available by calling (815) 961-2255.

How Do I Get There On Time?

The Rockford Paratransit is dedicated to providing safe, efficient, affordable and dependable transportation to the residents of Rockford and surrounding area. The following are ways you may help serve us:

- Make reservations as early as possible, but no later than 1 day in advance.
- In order to ensure the vehicle will be on time for other customers, the driver will not make unscheduled stops.
- If other customers get on or off the vehicle before your stop, it may be necessary for you to temporarily move.
- A customer may not refuse to ride with other customers.
- Be prepared for delays due to traffic or bad weather.
- On the return trip, if you miss the vehicle for your scheduled ride, please call Rockford Paratransit at (815) 961-2255, for TTY (815) 961-0072. We will send the next available vehicle as soon as possible.

What if My Request Cannot Be Accommodated?

- If there are no openings for the time requested, you may be offered an alternate time, up to one hour before or after the original time you requested.

Policies and Conduct

Packages and Assistance:

- Carry on packages are welcome. To accommodate yourself and other passengers, please limit the number of carry on packages to what you can carry yourself.
- In order for a Paratransit operator to assist in the loading and unloading packages, the following procedure is to be followed:
 1. The passenger makes a request
 2. Driver requests permission from the Dispatcher
 3. Dispatch authorizes the driver

If we authorize assistance, the driver will determine the amount of packages that they can physically handle in a timely manner in on trip with two hands.

- Rockford Paratransit will assist wheelchair customers where ramps are provided only. Our drivers will not assist with any stairs.
- We are unable to honor specific request for the following:
 1. Drivers
 2. Vehicles
 3. Seats

Visitor Policy:

Visitors from other cities who are eligible under ADA criteria are welcome to use Rockford Paratransit during their visit to Rockford for up to 21 days.

Visitors or out of town citizens with disabilities, who possess a valid ADA certification card, are eligible for immediate Paratransit service within the period of three (3) days upon arrival.

Citizens with disabilities visiting the area more than three (3) weeks, or have utilized Rockford Paratransit service for a total of twenty-one (21) days over any given calendar year will need to follow the certification enrollment process.

Rockford Paratransit customers are also offered this same service in other cities.

Can I Bring A Traveling Companion?

- Personal assistants are allowed to ride free of charge if such a need is indicated on your Rockford Paratransit application.
- Companions are welcome to ride with you for \$3.00 cash, per person, same as your fare.
- Companions or personal assistants must have the same reservation as the passenger they are accompanying.
- Rockford Paratransit requires you to reserve a space for your companion or your personal assistant when scheduling your reservation.
- Children accompanying you are considered travel companions. You must reserve space for children when scheduling your trip.
- Guide dogs and other service animals are allowed to accompany you if such a need was indicated on your Rockford Paratransit application. Please remind Rockford Paratransit dispatchers when scheduling your trip that a service animal will be accompanying you. Family pets will be allowed if confined to a pet carrier.



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Conduct Of Code:

It is our policy to provide the safest and most efficient service in the Rockford's community. To provide the highest number of rides as required by the Americans with Disability Act, of 1990, Rockford Paratransit must rely on certain guidelines to ensure all participants of the paratransit benefit. Customers who abuse these guidelines can adversely affect the paratransit program as a whole. Therefore, it is necessary to have policies that ensure all customers are afforded the opportunity to utilize the service to its maximum potential. The following identifies the Rockford Paratransit policy on customer misconduct.

Consideration Toward Others:

Customers may not operate any audio or visual equipment which infringes upon other customers' comfort or safety or impairs the driver's ability to transport passengers safely. Examples include: audio/visual devices without headsets, portable video games that have sound effects, etc., unless necessary for communicating between the driver and the rider.

Unintentional Misconduct:

Unintentional Misconduct is any act that is the direct and immediate consequence of the customer's disability, such as abusive language that is the consequence of Tourette's Syndrome.

If a customer commits an act of misconduct that he or she has been trained as inappropriate, that act is then considered intentional.

Consequences Of Unintentional Misconduct:

- A customer may be required to undergo behavior modification.
- A customer may be subject to any reasonable accommodation that will ensure the safety of all customers and drivers.
- The accommodation may last for a time period sufficient to allow the customer to learn appropriate behavior.
- The accommodation may be permanent if the conduct is beyond the customer's control.

Hazardous Conduct

A verbal or physical act that is generally offensive, invades the privacy rights of others, or touching another person in a rude, disrespectful or angry manner.

Abusive Conduct:

An act which created the potential for injury or death to a customer, driver or the general public.

Consequences of Abusive or Hazardous Misconduct:

1. 1st offense, depending on the severity of the abuse, may result in suspension of service up to 30 days.
2. 2nd offense within a one year period may result in suspension of service for 60 days.
3. 3rd offense within a one year period may result in suspension of service for one year. At the end of the suspension period, a customer must reapply for eligibility for paratransit service.
 - The accommodation may be permanent if the conduct is beyond the customer's control.

You will be notified in writing before Rockford Paratransit takes any of these steps. An eligible customer whose services are to be suspended because of misconduct has a right to request a hearing through an appeal process. Please refer to your handbook for a description of the appeals' process.

Title VI Policy & Complaint Procedure

The Rockford Mass Transit District unequivocally seeks to provide fair and equitable transportation to all persons within the District's service area. No persons shall be shorted, limited, or in any other way be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, physical or mental abilities or disabilities, ability to speak or understand the English Language, or financial wealth or the ability to earn financial income. If you feel you have been discriminated against, to file a complaint, or for more information on our policy please contact 815-961-9000.



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Call **815.961.2255** to schedule your ride

Important Numbers

Information on Routes and Schedules **(815) 961.9000**
(Assistance Available During Operation Hours)

Rockford Paratransit Service **(815) 961.2255**
Origin to Destination Service for the Disabled

RMTD schedules and information on our Paratransit service is also available in large print, audio, Braille and Spanish. Alternative formats are available in the RMTD Administrative office or our Transfer Center.



ROCKFORD MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT

The Rockford Mass Transit District is dedicated to providing safe, efficient, affordable, dependable and accessible transportation to the residents of Rockford and the surrounding areas.