

Ride & Thrive

Healthcare, Transportation,
and Medical Escort Guide





FriendshipWorks would like to thank the many volunteers, students, and donors, as well as our staff, who have made all of our programs possible.

Funding for this guide has been generously provided by the Gould Charitable Foundation.

And a special thank you to the work of our dedicated interns who were responsible for updating and creating the content:

Jordan Vitale, Viviane Sperb, and Shivangi Jha.

Ride & Thrive

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Since 1984, FriendshipWorks has been committed to combating social isolation and loneliness by fostering meaningful connections. We match volunteers with older adults to provide companionship and assistance, enhancing their health and overall quality of life. At the heart of our mission are our volunteers, who help create bonds that bring social, physical, and emotional benefits to both older adults and themselves.

One key way FriendshipWorks supports older adults is by improving their access to healthcare. Our Medical Escort volunteers assist with logistical challenges and help ease the anxiety of attending medical appointments. In 2019, we published our *Transportation and Escort Services* guide, and in response to the ongoing need for reliable transportation options across Greater Boston, we have now updated it. The guide will be available primarily on our website, www.fw4elders.org, with plans for a Spanish translation in the near future.

To learn more about any of our programs and volunteer opportunities, please visit our website, www.fw4elders.org or see our program list at the end of this guide.

Sincerely,

FriendshipWorks

Table of Contents

Glossary	5
Medical Escort Program	8
Transportation Options	12
Managing your Healthcare	15
Preparing for Your Visit: Your Health.....	16
Tips: Be Prepared.....	19
How to Advocate for Yourself.....	21
Electronic Health Records	23
Tips: Managing Prescriptions	24
Transportation Directory	26
Taxi Services.....	59
Buses	60
Ambulances	62
Other Transportation Resources	63
Ride Sharing Apps (Uber, Lyft).....	65
Technology & Transportation	65
Need help using technology?	66
Health Insurance & Transportation	71
PACE Programs	73
The FriendshipWorks Programs	74
Important Telephone Numbers	76

Glossary

Area Service access Points (ASAPs)

Agencies contracted with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs. ASAPs can help older adults connect with a variety of services such as home care, housing, financial wellness, safety, nutrition, and caregiver support. ASAPs also offer a resource and referral line. Services can be free or offered on a sliding scale depending on income. For a list of ASAPs and their coverage area, see:

<https://www.mass.gov/location-details/aging-services-access-points-asaps-in-massachusetts>

Councils On Aging

A municipally appointed agency that provides services to older adults, families and caregivers. Services provided are offered to residents of the designated city or county. Councils on Aging, often in conjunction with the local senior center, provide services such as fitness classes, meals assistance, health screenings or digital literacy.

Curb-to-Curb Service

A service that helps passengers with pick up and drop off at the curb of their destination. The driver may help the passenger with boarding or exiting the vehicle but does not provide assistance getting to the door of the building or to their home.

Door-to-Door Service

A service that helps passengers with pick up and drop off at the door of their destination. The driver may assist the passenger between the vehicle and the door of the

destination but will not go inside. However, some places use door-to-door and curb-to curb service interchangeably so you should also ask.

Door-through-Door Service

A service that helps passengers with personal, hands on support from their home through to the door of their destination.

Escort Provided

Indicates that an individual will accompany and/or assist a recipient throughout the transportation process and before, during, and after the appointment.

Fixed Route

Transit services where vehicles run on a regular, scheduled route and have fixed stops.

Paratransit service

Provides individualized or shared rides for people who are unable to use fixed-route public transit systems (e.g. MBTA's The Ride). The transportation is flexible in its routes but requires advance notice.

Ride Sharing Transportation

Door-to-door transportation that is usually available on demand. Typically requires use of a smartphone and app like Uber or Lyft (both of which are private companies). Some Councils on Aging may have special arrangements with ride sharing companies that have additional or different requirements.

Smart Device (Smart Phone)

A smart device is an electronic device that can connect to the internet or other networks and can collect, process, and transmit data (including video). The device could be a tablet/ipad or a mobile smart phone (e.g. Apple's iphone). These devices can use a cellular network or can connect to a wireless internet.

Smart devices often utilize apps, a self-contained software package that allows a user to perform specific tasks. Lyft and Uber are apps you download on your smart device to utilize their ride sharing services.

Volunteer Driver Programs

Programs that arrange for volunteers to provide transportation. Volunteers typically have had a background check and training from the program. These programs typically require advance notice to accommodate schedules of volunteers. Programs may require passengers to pay for tolls or parking.

Wheelchair access

Vehicles that are designed for wheelchair users to easily enter and exit and contain features like lowered floors, ramps or lifts. (This does not mean that the wheelchair can be collapsed and transported in the trunk, which most vehicles can do.)

Medical Escort Program

FriendshipWorks' Medical Escort Program offers older adults (over 60 years of age, or 55+ for those with significant vision or hearing impairments) with trained volunteers to accompany them to and from their medical appointments. This service is FREE to older adults and is currently offered in Boston, Brookline, and Newton.

As we age, our social circles change — sometimes growing, sometimes shrinking — but everyone can use a helping hand now and then. FriendshipWorks recruits and trains volunteers to offer companionship, conversation, reassurance, and light support when attending doctor or dentist visits, or even hospital procedures. Volunteers can lend a steady arm or push a wheelchair, help navigate hospitals, accompany someone into an exam room or to a lab after the appointment, take notes if needed, or help confirm transportation home. We will do our best to match you with someone who speaks a certain native language if you wish!

Why would I be interested in having a Medical Escort?

There are all kinds of reasons you might choose to have an escort come with you to a medical appointment. Some people enjoy having friendly conversation that helps distract them or eases the anxiety associated with the appointment. Others just enjoy having someone along to help pass the time, or might need some extra physical assistance or other support and do not have a friend or family member who is available.

What areas does FriendshipWorks' Medical Escort Program cover?

Currently, medical escort assistance is available in Boston, Brookline and Newton.

Do you provide transportation?

Our service does NOT provide transportation and we are not a transportation service. Escorts will RIDE with you on any transportation you arrange (e.g. MBTA The Ride or a taxi). This guide can help you understand your options. Only very occasionally do we have volunteers with cars and who can drive.

How far in advance do I need to reach out to request an escort?

We ask for 10 business days advance notice. We can also take requests several months in advance. The more time we are given, the more likely it is that we can find a volunteer to escort you. Keep in mind, some days and weeks may book quicker than others.

If the day of your appointment is full, we are happy to offer other potential days to find a time that works for you, the doctor, and a volunteer.

How should I apply?

The best option is to submit a request online. Submitting online helps us process requests more quickly and stay organized during busy times.

Apply Online:

Step 1: Go to our website fw4elders.org

Step 2: On the right hand side of the page, click on tab:
Refer an Older Adult. You can even refer yourself!

Step 3: Scroll down and click on the button that says
Referral Form and fill out your/their information
and press submit.

If you can't use a computer, you can also call our Medical Escort Coordinator at (617) 482-1510, ext 126 to schedule an escort or if you have any questions about the program. Once you submit a request, you should receive a call from a staff member within a few business days.

What information do I need in order to get a Medical Escort from FriendshipWorks?

- Time and date of the appointment (10 business days notice please)
- Location of the appointment, including which department and floor the appointment is on
- Whether the escort is one way or round trip
- Type of transportation you have/plan to arrange (e.g. AgeStrong Shuttle, taxi, Uber)
- What time you want/need the volunteer to be at the house of the older adult
- If there are any mobility challenges we should know about (use a walker, wheelchair, etc.)

If you do not have all the information, such as the mode of transportation finalized, you can still submit a request as long as you have the date and time of the appointment.

What happens next?

Once a referral is received, the Medical Escort Coordinator will reach out to the older adult to confirm the information, have a short intake conversation, and explain the next steps. In some cases, the Coordinator may first reach out to the person who made the referral (if it was not a self-referral) to gather a few key pieces of information.

Can I arrange a medical escort for someone else and can someone refer me?

Yes! Anyone can complete the form online or call. If you are calling or completing the form on behalf of someone else, please make sure you have explained what a medical escort is to the older adult and gotten their consent for us to call.

Reminder: FriendshipWorks' Medical Escort Program does not provide Transportation. Please see the [Transportation Directory](#) in this guide.

Transportation Options

There are many different types of transportation options you can use to get to an appointment. Some of these options are free but may be restricted to certain residents, require you to meet eligibility criteria ahead of time, or have a fee. More detailed information about these options can be found in this guide.

This guide focuses primarily on transportation options in the Greater Boston area and may not include all the options available in other parts of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Generally most transportation services cannot assist you in and out of your residence or stay with you during your appointment. That's where a medical escort volunteer from FriendshipWorks can help!



At the time this guide was created, some common transportation options include:

- **MBTA Ride** – Van and car service available at reduced fare cost once approved
- **MBTA Subways/Bus** – Reduced fares available for older adults and users of The MBTA Ride
- **AgeStrong's Senior Shuttle** – Free for Boston residents
- **GoGo Newton Transportation** – Contracted transportation with GoGo Grandparents for free or reduced cost transportation for Newton residents once approved
- **Modern Ride Taxi Service** – Free rides to medical appointments for Brookline residents when arranged through the Brookline Senior Center
- **Brookline Transportation Program** – Discounted rides (up to 4/mo) with Lyft for Brookline residents once approved (income eligible)
- **Brookline Transportation with GoGo** – Similar to Newton, contracted transportation with GoGo Grandparents for free or reduced cost transportation once approved (income eligible)
- **Door2Door Transportation** (Cambridge)
- **Door2Door Transportation** (Somerville)
- **PT1 if MassHealth eligible** – Regardless of the plan, your medical provider needs to fill out an online transportation request form for you for free transportation to medical appointments. For example, if you

have a Senior Care Options Plan you would be eligible for PT1 (See the [Health Insurance & Transportation](#) section for more information.)

- **Local Senior Center/Council on Aging** – Many operate a free shuttle, have volunteer drivers, or can provide rides at a reduced price (examples include: Wellesley COA Bus)
- **Uber Health Discounted Rides** – Ask your doctor’s office if they participate
- **Taxi Vouchers** – Boston and Cambridge residents can purchase at reduced price
- **PACE Participants** (Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) – If you receive your healthcare through a PACE program, your team can arrange free transportation
- **Assisted Living or Elder Buildings** – Some residences can help arrange transportation for medical appointments for their residents
- **Private Transportation Services** – You hire and pay for such as Gentle Medical Transport Services or BestRide USA
- **Ride Sharing Services** – through Uber/Lyft that you schedule and pay for (See the [Technology & Transportation](#) for more information.)

Information and eligibility can change from what is provided in this guide. Always double check with the organization or entity providing transportation. Let us know if you find the information has changed and we will update our online version of the guide!

You are the most important member of your healthcare team.

Today, good healthcare is a partnership between the patient and the medical provider. Medical care has become complicated, as there may be many doctors and facilities involved in your care and healthcare providers have limited time during visits because they are seeing more patients. Keeping track of your health can be confusing but there are many benefits to being proactive in managing and participating in your care, such as:

- More satisfaction with your care
- Reduced complications
- Reduced anxiety about decisions
- Less likely to receive tests or procedures which may be unnecessary
- Potentially lower health care costs by identifying issues earlier or undertaking preventative steps
- And even better health outcomes

On the following pages you will read how you can take a more active role in managing your care and find links and helpful tools to keep you organized.

Preparing for Your Visit: Your Health

Taking steps to improve or maintain your health can begin before you step foot into a doctor's office by thinking and setting health care goals. Your goals might be to stay independent as long as possible, cure or stay on top of an illness or condition, or to feel well enough to attend a special event. Having goals can help you better prepare for doctors' visits, prioritize what questions or follow up supports you want to ask about, and/or give you motivation to deal with your health challenges. And remember, your health is not your physical body but your emotional health as well.

Here are the 4 Ms* to keep in mind:

1. Matter
2. Medication
3. Mind
4. Mobility

Download this handy guide that includes worksheets with questions to help you think about each of these areas.

<https://www.fw4elders.org/TG4M>

*The 4Ms graphic and guide are from an initiative of The John A. Hartford Foundation and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) in partnership with the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA).

The Four Ms

For each of the 4Ms, think about your situation now, what's going well, and what could be better. Then write down any questions you have or things you want to share with your provider.

1.  What **matters** to you in your life
2.  **Medications** you may take
3.  Your **mind** and sense of well-being
4.  Your **mobility**

Tips for your next medical visit



Before

Prepare and Bring:

- Family history
- Insurance information
- Directions to appointment
- A list of all medications and supplements
- A list of questions for your provider



During

- Have paper & pen, or someone to take notes
- Share most important questions and concerns first!
- Express your feelings
- Ask your questions!



After

- Write down what you recall
- Make follow-up appointments
- Pick up prescriptions
- Call your doctor if you have more questions or aren't clear
- Follow doctor's directions carefully
- Call back if medications cause unpleasant side effects
- Know how and when to get test results

Tips: Be Prepared

While going to the doctor may bring up anxiety because we do not always know which questions to ask or which questions are the most important, it may be helpful to instead separate what you need to do before, during, or after the visit. The following suggestions may help.

BEFORE your appointment:

- Know family history if possible
- Make a list of any prescriptions you take, including over the counter, vitamins or herbal supplements
- Write out any questions you have and the reason(s) for the visit such as: A description of the issue, how long it has been going on, the location in your body, and the severity of the symptoms.
- Know where your doctor is located (address, what floor, etc.)
- Let your doctor know if you need any language services
- Request accommodations if needed (wheelchair access, extra time, accessible exam tables, etc.)
- Know how you will get to and from the appointment. This guide can help you figure out your transportation options.
- Decide if it would be helpful to bring a support person such as a family member or a FriendshipWorks escort. *Reach out to FriendshipWorks at least 10 business days for an escort to your appointment!*

-
- Make sure to take your insurance or plan card and a photo ID.

Here's a template from JFS of MetroWest that may help keep your information organized. Download template here: www.fw4elders.org/TGMedOrg

DURING your appointment:

- Take paper and a pen/pencil to take any notes you want. You can ask your support person, if you brought one, to take notes for you.
- Don't be afraid to ask the doctor, nurse or other healthcare team member to repeat or explain information.
- Answer questions as completely as you can.
- Make sure you understand the treatment, why your team is recommending it, and ask if there are different options. Let the healthcare team know immediately if there's a part of the treatment you cannot/will not do, or are unsure about. Remember, you can take time to think about it and schedule a follow up appointment to discuss further.
- Make any follow up appointments if recommended before you leave. Have the front desk help you with a referral if your healthcare plan or insurance requires it.
- Leave time for any x-ray or lab work, or picking up a prescription.

AFTER your appointment:

- Pick up any prescription or supplies ordered. Check the label to be sure it is what the doctor ordered. If you have questions, ask the pharmacist.

- Review your notes from the appointment. If you forgot to ask something or have additional questions, follow up with your healthcare provider.
- Make sure you know when and how you will learn the results of any tests or lab work.

How to Advocate for Yourself

Being a self-advocate will help you achieve your healthcare goals so you can experience the best quality of life. Healthcare professionals welcome you as partners in your healthcare and will not mind you asking clarifying questions.

Being a self-advocate means trying to get the information you need to make decisions and get the care you need. Just as there are things you should expect from your healthcare team, you also have responsibilities as the patient.

You can start by knowing your rights, and being confident in them! Your rights as a patient include:

- Being treated with respect, including having your concerns and questions listened to
- Getting explanations for the reasons for and risks/benefits of tests, procedures, or treatment
- Refusing a test, procedure, or treatment
- Choose or change doctors
- Knowing your doctor's qualifications
- Have a friend, family member or support person present during office visits
- Getting a second opinion, especially before surgery

-
- Access to your medical record free of charge
 - Receive healthcare in your preferred language, which may include the assistance of an interpreter

You can see the full list of patient rights on many hospitals' websites (e.g. Mass General Hospital, Tufts Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital). These are rights as outlined in federal laws and under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Patients' Bill of Rights.

As a patient, you are expected to:

- Be on time for appointments.
- Bring any insurance or other health plan information or cards with you if a planned visit.
- Call in advance to cancel or if you will be late.
- Treat providers with respect.
- Be open and honest about your health history, including medication, over the counter or recreational drugs.
- Communicate your concerns and questions clearly to your doctor.
- Ask for an explanation if you don't understand.
- Let your healthcare provider know if you feel you cannot follow a plan of care for any reason — they will work with you!
- Describe symptoms clearly and accurately.
- Answer your doctor's questions truthfully.
- Follow your doctor's directions; take prescriptions as directed and communicate with the healthcare team if you have a concern.

Electronic Health Records

Your medical information is usually kept in an electronic health record, most of which you can access. This information is secure, private, and includes recent doctors' visits, tests and lab results, as well as the ability to schedule or cancel appointments.

Using the online portal to access your electronic health record is a personal choice. Some people like the ease and prefer to get information quicker. For others, it may produce anxiety and raise questions since you are seeing information without speaking to a healthcare professional.

If you do decide to use the online portal, also be sure to ask your doctors' office how they would prefer you use the portal. For example, some providers may encourage you to use the portal for appointments and questions, while other providers recommend you make an appointment to discuss any health care concerns.

If you would like to use your healthcare providers' online portal, ask them if they have any resources to help you learn. You can also access workshops through SeniorPlanet at <https://seniorplanet.org/telemedicine/>.

If you are in FriendshipWorks' service area, you can also request a Friendly Helper for individualized help (1-3 visits) to learn how to access your electronic health portal. A volunteer helper can help you with the technology itself but will not provide medical advice or interpretation. You will need internet access and a computer, tablet or smartphone. Since these are trained volunteers, you

will need to be somewhat flexible and work with their schedule. Call (617) 482-1510 or visit www.fw4elders.org.

Tips: Managing Prescriptions

Medications can play a critical role in maintaining well being. Staying organized can become difficult as the number of prescriptions increase and/or have different dosing schedules.

Important things to know for being safe when taking medications:

- Take the right amount of medication and dose.
- Make sure to know what to do if you are late or forget to take your medication.
- Know if the side effects you experience are typical, or if you are having a bad reaction. If you are unsure, you can ask the pharmacist or your doctor.
- **Storing medication:** Some medications need to be stored at a certain temperature. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for proper storage instructions.
- **Keep a list of medications:** In case of emergency, it is important to have a list including ALL medication and any other medical info that someone may need.

Tips for Keeping Medications Organized:

- Take your medications at the same time everyday. Getting into a habit is very useful!
- Set a timer to remind you each day about taking your medication.
- Use a day of the week pillbox.
- Turn your bottle upside down after taking medication so that if at the end of the day your bottle is standing upright, you would be reminded to take it. (Make sure to reset your bottles each night before going to bed!)
- Leave yourself a written reminder where you have breakfast each morning so you see it first thing.
- Print out a template to write down your prescription information. Here's one template for download from JFS MetroWest: fw4elders.org/TGMedList
- Your provider might know of a text, call or email reminder service.

Abundant Home Health Concierge

(617) 795-2171 | (617) 584-5175

<https://abundanthomehealthcare.com>

Email: concierge@abundanthhc.com

Tim Smillie (Concierge Manager): 617-584-5175

- **Eligibility:** N/A
- **Cost:** Average \$90 one way
- **Escort provided:** Yes
- **Advanced notice:** At least two days
- **Wheelchair access:** No lift, but can put a wheelchair in the trunk of a car
- **Hours:** 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

1 Accord, Inc.

(508) 579-2656

<https://1accordtransport.com/services.php>

- **Eligibility:** N/A. Operate in Greater Massachusetts.
- **Cost:** Varies. Call for a quote.
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** Flexible

Age Strong Commission's Senior Shuttle

(617) 635-3000 | Schedule services: (617) 635-4366

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/age-strong-shuttle>

- **Eligibility:** 60+, Boston residents
- **Cost:** Free
- **Advanced notice:** 3 business days
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, must specify that you have a wheelchair when making reservation
- **Hours:** Mon-Fri: 8:30am to approx. 2:30-3:30pm. Van must be able to return to office by 4:00 p.m.

American Cancer Society

(800)-227-2345

www.cancer.org

Transportation to cancer-related appointments only. Volunteers provide rides.

- **Eligibility:** Road to Recovery; cancer patients throughout Massachusetts
- **Cost:** free
- **Advanced notice:** 4 business days
- **Escort provided:** Yes, if requested
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, can request a companion to help
- **Hours:** Hotline available 24 hours a day; 7 days a week

Annex Transit

(978) 866-0850

<https://annextransit.com/medical-transportation>

Email: annextransit@gmail.com

- **Eligibility:** N/A
 - **Cost:** Call to get a quote. Also accepts most insurances.
 - **Advance notice:** 48 hours
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes
 - **Hours:** 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
-

Arlington Council on Aging

(781) 316-3403

There are 4 options for Arlington residents. All can be scheduled by calling the Council on Aging.

<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/health-human-services/council-on-aging/transportation-information>

- **Van rides:** are available for rides to medical appointments and errands within Arlington only. Cost is \$6/round trip and requires 2 business days advance notice.
- **Discount taxi service:** within Arlington. Requires registration with Council on Aging and payment of annual membership, then schedule directly with taxi company.

- **Volunteer driver:** Council on Aging may be able to arrange a volunteer driver for medical appointments outside of Arlington. Passengers are responsible for paying parking fees and tolls. Currently \$10 ride each way.
 - **Cancer patients:** Residents going to cancer treatments at local hospitals (including Boston) can receive free transportation due to a private grant.
-

Aseda Transport

(978) 880-1522

<https://asedamedtransport.com/nemt-services/>

Email: info@asedamedtransport.com

- **Eligibility:** N/A
 - **Cost:** Varies. Call for a quote. Depends on the pick-up and drop-off (Example: \$89 for 18 Miles = approx \$5/mile)
 - **Advance notice:** 24 Hours
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
-

Belmont Council on Aging

Transportation Coordinator: (617) 993-2980

www.beechstreetcenter.org

- **Eligibility:** Belmont residents age 60+ can ride the Belder Bus to medical appointments, grocery shopping or errands within Belmont and some surrounding communities.
- **Cost:** Suggested donation per ride is \$2.
- **Advance notice:** Reservations required, with minimum 48 hours advance notice.
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** Rides scheduled 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on the hour or half hour

Belmont Taxi Medical Rides

Transportation Coordinator: (617) 993-2980

This program is grant funded. Call to confirm availability and cost.

- **Eligibility:** Belmont residents age 60+
- **Advance notice:** Call 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at least two business days in advance to book your ride
- **Escort:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Rides are available 24/7

Best Home Care

Wakefield Office: (781) 224-3600

Middletown Office: (978) 774-2005

Andover Office: (978) 806-2002

www.bestmakesithappen.com

- **Eligibility:** Must be clients of Best Home Care (see website for service area).
- **Cost:** \$37.00/hour for under 4 hours; \$28/hour for 4+ hours
- **Advance notice:** 48 Hours
- **Escort provided:** Yes
- **Wheelchair access:** Lightweight wheelchairs
- **Hours:** 7 days a week

Boston Coach

(800) 672-7676

- **Eligibility:** N/A
- **Cost:** Quote Depends on the pick up and drop off (Example: Sedan - \$162 for 18 Miles = approx. \$9/mile)
- **Advance notice:** 24 Hours
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Customer Service: Available 24/7
- **Meetings and events:** Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Boston Senior Home Care

(617) 292-6211

<https://bshcinfo.org>

- **Eligibility:** Clients only, 60+ or disabled or with certain dementia conditions. Also based on factors such as age, residence, and a person's ability to carry out daily tasks. Transportation through staff's individual vehicles.
 - **Cost:** Income-based
 - **Advance notice:** 5 days
 - **Escort provided:** Yes
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
-

Brookline: Brookline Senior Center

Contact the Transportation Coordinator: (617) 730-2644

<https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/services/transportation/>

There are several options for Brookline residents to receive assistance with transportation to medical appointments.

Brookline Medical Transportation Program

(No advance enrollment required)

Transportation requests should be left on the Brookline Senior Center's Medical Transportation Line at:

(617) 879-4878

- **Eligibility:** Residents 60+. Medical facilities within Brookline and to select Boston area sites (including the Longwood Medical Area, Harvard Vanguard-

Kenmore, Mass General, Mass Eye & Ear, Faulkner Hospital, Boston Medical Center, the VA Hospital, and St. Elizabeth's).

- **Cost:** Free
 - **Advance notice:** At least 3 days in advance
 - **Wheelchair access:** No, but wheelchair can be put in trunk
 - **Hours:** 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
-

Brookline Discounted Program with Lyft

Transportation Coordinator: (617) 730-2644

- **Eligibility:** Income-eligible residents (see website) 60+. Access up to 4 subsidized rides per month. Discount automatically downloads each month into the Lyft app on your smartphone. No restriction on location of trip.
 - **Cost:** Residents pay the first \$2 of the ride and the Brookline pays up to the next \$10.
 - **Advance notice:** N/A
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** 24/7
-

Brookline Discounted Program with Go-Go

Contact Maria Foster (Transportation Coordinator):
(617) 730-2644 or mfoster@brooklinema.gov

- **Eligibility:** Income-eligible residents (see website) 60+ can access up to 4 subsidized rides per month. This program allows you to call GoGo Grandparent from your landline or 'flip' phone, who then arranges for an Uber or Lyft. Trips limited to within Brookline and select nearby medical facilities.
- **Cost:** Residents pay the first \$2 of the ride and the Brookline pays up to the next \$10.
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** 24/7

Cambridge: Door to Door Transportation by SCM

Call (617) 625-1191 ext. 0 for rides to local non-emergency medical appointments

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/programsforadults/ccpd/Transportation>

- **Eligibility:** Cambridge residents 60+. Provides transportation to medical facilities in Cambridge and to most hospitals and other medical destinations in Boston and Brookline. Must call to book a reservation between 9:00 a.m. -1:30 p.m.
- **Cost:** Suggested donation of \$2 (local) or \$4 (Boston/Burlington) per ride.
- **Advance notice:** Reservations can be made from 2 days prior to ride, up to 2 weeks in advance.

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- **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Wheelchair lifts available but no carry down service
 - **Hours:** 9:00 a.m. and returns up to 4:00 p.m.

Cambridge: City of Cambridge Taxi Discount Coupon Program

Cambridge Council on Aging: (617) 349-6220

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/dhsp/programsforadults/ccpd/transportation/taxidiscountcouponprogram>

Taxi discount coupons, funded by the City of Cambridge, are offered free of charge to older adult residents. Residents should contact the Cambridge Council on Aging and be prepared to show proof of residency and age.

- Coupons are issued in books of 10; each coupon is worth \$2.50. The passenger may use one coupon for fares under \$7.00 and a maximum of two coupons for a \$5.00 discount for one-way fares of \$7.00 or more.
- The coupons are valid for use only with taxicabs that are licensed by the City of Cambridge.

Central Boston Elder Services

- **Eligibility:** Clients only (ONE CARE PLAN), 60+ and those under 60 with certain conditions as Alzheimer's.
- **Service area:** Allston, Back Bay, Fenway, Mission Hill, North Dorchester, North Jamaica Plain, South End, and Roxbury in Boston

-
- **Cost:** Depends on the Insurance you have be it MassHealth, One Care, etc
 - **Advance notice:** 48 hours
 - **Escort provided:** No
 - **Hours:** 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
-

Charles River Transportation Management Authority (TMA) - EZ Ride

(857) 285-6520

<https://charlesrivertma.org/>

Email: charlesrivertma@gmail.org

Fixed route transportation connecting Boston's North Station and Cambridgeport via Kendall Square, serving North Point, Community College, Lechmere, East Cambridge, and MIT.

- **Eligibility:** N/A
 - **Cost:** Free (at least for now)
 - **Advance notice:** N/A
 - **Escort provided:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes, all EZRide buses are low-floor and equipped with wheelchair ramps and kneelers
 - **Hours:** See website for schedule and exact route information.
-

Chestnut Hill Errands and More

<https://chestnuthillerrands.com>

Private transportation service

(617) 874-0487

-
- **Eligibility:** N/A
 - **Cost:** Varies **Advance notice:** 48 Hours
 - **Escort provided:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
-

City of Boston: Discounted Taxi Coupons

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/how-buy-taxi-coupons>

Coupon books can be purchased at Boston City Hall (1 City Hall Square, room 271). Taxi Coupon Books are also sold throughout Boston neighborhoods. Search www.boston.gov to find more information on locations and times.

- **Eligibility:** Boston residents 65+
- **Cost:** \$5 per book (\$10 value), maximum 2 books per month per resident. Do not expire.
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Call taxi company to inquire.
- **Hours:** 24/7; 7 days/week

Some of the Taxi Companies accepting coupons:

- Boston Cab Association (617) 536-3200
- I.T.O.A. Cab Association (617) 825-4000
- City Cab Association (617) 536-5100
- Metro Cab Association (617) 782-5500
- Tunnel Taxi (617) 567-2700

Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA)

Member services: (866) 610-2273

www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/ma/members/

- **Eligibility:** 65+ and have a Senior Care Options or One Care plan through CCA. Transportation must be arranged by CCA's transportation benefit administrator, Coordinated Transportation Solutions (CTS), to be covered. CTS can be reached at (855) 204-1410.
 - **Cost:** Free
 - **Advanced notice:** 72 hours
 - **Escort provided:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes
 - **Hours:** office open 7 days/week; call to see about transportation hours
-

Dariti Transportation LLC

(978) 788-3864

<https://daritigroup.com/>

Email: darititransportation@gmail.com

- **Eligibility:** N/A. Service area primarily Middlesex and some of Suffolk County (including Boston)
- **Cost:** Varies. Contact for Estimate.
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** 6:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday; Saturday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Sunday by appointment

Dedham Council on Aging Van

(781) 751-9495

<https://www.dedham-ma.gov/town-departments/council-on-aging/transportation-services>

- **Eligibility:** 55+ for appointments within Dedham
 - **Cost:** free but requested donation \$2/per ride
 - **Advance notice:** Two weeks
 - **Escort provided:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes
 - **Hours:** 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
-

Door to Door Transportation by SCM: Everett, Malden, Medford

Similar to transportation services provided in Cambridge and Somerville. Contact Door to Door for more details.

<https://www.scmtransportation.org/>

East Boston Neighborhood Health Center Shuttle

Customer Service: (617) 638-6874

- **Eligibility:** For HealthNet members, shuttle between the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center and Boston Medical Center.
- **Cost:** Free
- **Advance notice:** Runs on schedule
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Download schedule: <https://www.fw4elders.org/TGEBSshuttle>

Friends in Service Helping (FISH)

Answering Service: (781) 861-9300

<https://fishlexington.org>

- **Eligibility:** Volunteer Driver program for residents of Lexington to medical appointments in Lexington, Boston and nearby environs. To schedule a ride, call the FISH answering service above only between 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. two business days (and excluding holidays) before your appointment.
- **Cost:** Free except for tolls & parking
- **Advance notice:** 2 days business days (exactly)
- **Escort provided:** No. Participants must be able to get in and out of a vehicle without the driver's assistance.
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Flexible but must call within time allotted above

Go-Go-Grandparent

(855) 464-6872

www.gogograndparent.com

Some communities, such as Newton and Brookline, have special arrangements with Go-Go Grandparent for their residents. Please see those entries for more information about transportation in those communities.

- **Eligibility:** Anyone above age 50+
- **Cost:** Must register and monthly fee of \$29.99
- **Advance notice:** 30 minutes
- **Escort provided:** No

- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** 24/7; 7 days/week

Can call to order your Uber/Lyft without using a smartphone.

Gentle Medical Transportation Services

(508) 206-0932

<https://www.gentlemedicaltransportservices.com/services/>

Email: info@gentlemedicaltransportservices.com

Private transportation services to many healthcare facilities throughout the Commonwealth.

- **Eligibility:** All towns in MA
- **Cost:** Varies. Call for an estimate. MassHealth eligible individuals may have transportation covered but must be arranged by a healthcare provider
- **Advance notice:** 48 hours. (For next day or same day service - call the booking line at (508) 206-0932)
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** 5:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday; 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Saturday - Sunday

Habilitation Assistance Corporation

Transportation Office: (508) 746-5715

Private transportation company. While may contract with municipalities and other state agencies or brokers to provide transportation, the following information is about their private, fixed route transportation services.

- **Eligibility:** No age limit for the program
- **Cost:** Varies
- **Advance notice:** Call for further information
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

JFS of MetroWest

(508) 875-3100 x 110

<https://jfsmweldercare.org/our-services/patient-navigator/>

Email: patientnav@jfsmw.org

JFS Patient Navigator program provides transportation and volunteer escorts to accompany you to medical appointments. Volunteer patient navigators can help you prepare before an appointment, accompany you on the visit, take notes during the visit or other assistance following your appointment.

- **Eligibility:** 60+ and live in Framingham or Natick. Must be able to enter/exit vehicles independently.
- **Cost:** Free for eligible clients. Call to determine eligibility. Clients pay any parking charges.
- **Advance notice:** 7 days
- **Escort:** Yes
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** 24/7

The Joe Andruzzi Foundation (JAF) Treatment Transportation Program

(508) 261-0630

<https://joeandruzzifoundation.org/how-we-help/assistance/>

Email: tp@joeandruzzifoundation.org

- **Eligibility:** Transportation arranged through Lyft and local cab companies for cancer-treatment only. Available to residents in Massachusetts.
- **Cost:** Free for eligible clients. Call to determine eligibility. Clients are expected to pay any parking charges.
- **Advance notice:** 7 days
- **Escort:** Yes
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. weekdays

Mass General Brigham Shuttles

(617) 726-2250

<https://www.massgeneralbrigham.org/en/patient-care/patient-visitor-information/planning-your-visit/shuttles>

Email: phstransportation@partners.org

Provides fixed route shuttles between Mass General, Brigham and Women's, their satellite locations (e.g. Everett, Chelsea) or Faulkner Hospital, and other locations. Some routes are for employees only. See website for detailed info. There is also information about shuttles on each hospital's website.

- **Eligibility:** Patient of Mass General Brigham
- **Cost:** Free

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- **Advance notice:** N/A unless need wheelchair access.
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Most routes. If calling for lift, need to call 24 hours in advance.
 - **Hours:** Vary but most run early morning until at least 7:00 p.m.
-

MassHealth Prescription for Transportation (PT-1)

If you are MassHealth eligible, your provider can request free transportation to and from your medical appointment by completing a PT-1 form. See [Healthcare & Transportation](#) section for more details.

MBTA Reduced Fare Program

<https://www.mbta.com/fares/reduced>

Apply online at <https://www.mbta.com/fares/reduced/senior-charliecard> or in-person at The Charlie Service Center located at 296 Washington Street, Boston, MA. You will need to bring a valid government-issued form of identification such as a driver's license or passport.

- **Eligibility:** 65+
- **Cost:** reduces cost of one-way fares by 50% when using a Senior CharlieCard. Discounts also available for monthly passes. Blind Access Charlie cards allow those legally blind to ride for free.
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort provided:** No

-
- **Wheelchair access:** Some subway stations; some buses have lifts
 - **Hours:** Monday 8:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.; Tuesday-Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00p.m. You can schedule an appointment online if desired.
-

MetroWest Regional Transit Authority Boston Area Hospital Shuttle

(508) 820-4650

<https://www.mwrta.com/routes/commuter-shuttles/boston-hospital-shuttle>

Must complete registration form and set up a fare account prior to using the service. Registration form and shuttle schedule is also available online.

- **Eligibility:** Framingham, Natick, and Wellesley residents can be picked up at their homes and go to any of the following hospitals: West Roxbury VA, Jamaica Plain VA, New England Baptist, Brigham and Women's, Dana Farber, Beth Israel or Joslin Clinic. Residents from other communities can park and meet the shuttle at one of its designated stops.
- **Cost:** Income based reduced fare
- **Advance notice:** No
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** Tues, Wed, Thurs 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

MetroWest Ride (MetroWest Regional Transit Authority)

Main Office: (508) 935-2222

Call Center: (508) 820-4650

<https://www.mwrta.com/senior-and-disabled>

- **Eligibility:** Residents of Framingham, Natick, Wellesley, and Dover who cannot access fixed bus routes. Contact Call Center to register.
- **Cost:** Varies. Reduced fares are currently \$2.00 within MetroWest Ride service area.
- **Advance notice:** 2 business days (1 day if ADA certified)
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** Tues, Wed, Thurs 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Mission Hill Link

<https://www.missionhilllink.com/>

Email: thelink@missionhilllink.com

Fixed route shuttle driven by volunteers between Brigham Circle (Boston) to Roxbury Crossing (Ruggles MBTA station). This route provides access to Brigham and Women's and New England Baptist Hospitals.

- **Eligibility:** N/A
- **Cost:** \$.50/ride older adults (\$1.50 otherwise)
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** 10:30 a.m.- 6:30 p.m. weekdays

Mystic Valley Elder Services TRIP Metro North Program

(781) 324-7705, ext. 346

<https://mves.org/services/transportation/>

- **Eligibility:** 60+ who live in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield or Winthrop
- **Cost:** Varies
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Flexible, arranged between participant and driver

Needham Council on Aging

Transportation Line: (781) 343-1258

Rides available through a partnership with Go-Go Grandparent within 20 mile radius of Needham. Maximum 2 rides per week. This program is grant-based and may pause from time to time.

<https://www.needhamma.gov/598/transportation-services>

- **Eligibility:** Residents 60+
- **Cost:** None
- **Advance notice:** Depends on Go-Go Grandparent scheduling
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Not usually
- **Hours:** To register or schedule a ride 9:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Rides can be between 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Needham Community Council

(781) 444-2415

Can schedule volunteer drivers to provide rides to appointments within Needham. Call for more details and availability.

Newton: GoGo Newton Transportation

(617) 796-4646 or

www.newtonma.gov/gogo

Email: gogo@newtonma.gov to set up an appointment

Or apply online at: surveymonkey.com/r/GoGoNewton

Newton residents can use GoGo Newton to get connected to vetted Uber and Lyft drivers to get to medical appointments (between 2-6 round trips/month). Once approved, the City of Newton subsidizes the cost of the rides depending on the income of the resident. Once an account has been created (this can take a few days), you can call (855) 605-8544 to request a ride, schedule a ride on the website, or in the app.

- **Eligibility:** Residents age 65+ or former NewMo riders age 60-64. Rides need to originate or end in Newton but can include trips to anywhere in Newton, Brookline, Needham, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, Weston and select medical facilities in Boston.
- **Cost:** There are three tiers of eligibility that affect the cost and number of eligible trips per month. Information is available on website.
- **Advance notice:** Trips can be scheduled up to 6 months in advance or requested on demand.
- **Escort provided:** No

- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, after the account has been created with 48 hour advance notice
 - **Hours:** Once approved, rides can be booked 24/7, 365 days a year.
-

Our Pleasure2Help

(781) 862-4300

<https://ourpleasure2help.com/>

Provides non-emergency, medical transportation throughout Boston area and to Boston Hospitals. Medical escort transportation service for post-surgical procedures requiring sedation/anesthesia. No wheelchair accessible vehicles, however a wheelchair can be stored in vehicle. Call for more information.

Quincy Department of Elder Services

Transportation Manager: (617) 376-1242

https://www.quincyma.gov/departments/elder_services/

Transportation to medical establishments within the City of Quincy, all major Boston Hospitals, Milton Hospital or Neponset Health Center.

- **Eligibility:** Residents age 60+
- **Cost:** Free
- **Advance notice:** Prefer two weeks
- **Escort:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. weekdays

Real Care Transportation

(603) 206-4710 Option 1 or 2

<https://www.realcaretransportation.net/>

Non-emergency medical transportation for all age groups.
Private transportation service coming online soon.

- **Eligibility:** All towns in MA except very far west
 - **Cost:** Varies
 - **Advance notice:** 1 week
 - **Escort:** Yes
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes
 - **Hours:** 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Weekdays
-

The RIDE (MBTA)

Mobility Center: (617)337-2727

<https://www.mbta.com/accessibility/the-ride>

Must first attend an eligibility screening at the MBTA Mobility Center (1000 Massachusetts Avenue, 2nd floor, Boston) between 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Transportation assistance may be available to and from the screening. Approval must be granted before regular service can begin.

- **Eligibility:** Curb-to-curb para-transit service is available for those 60+ and unable to use public transit due to a disability. Serves 58 cities and towns in Greater Boston area.
- **Cost:** Varies and can depend on your location. One-way fare typically varies between \$3.35-\$5.60. RIDE customers enrolled in the senior or income-eligible reduced fare programs pay one-way fares ranging from \$1.70 to \$2.80.

-
- **Advance notice:** 1-5 days
 - **Escort Provided:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes
 - **Hours:** 5:00 a.m.-1:00 a.m.
-

Rides with David

(508) 333-4153

<https://www.rideswithdavid.com/>

Private car service in MetroWest. Can schedule to pick up prescriptions as well.

- **Eligibility:** Anyone. Service area: Ashland, Concord, Dover, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Lincoln, Marlboro, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Natick, Needham, Newton, Sherborn, Southboro, Sudbury, Stow, Waltham, Wayland, Wellesley, Westboro and Weston.
 - **Cost:** Varies, starting at \$50 for roundtrip. Call for quote.
 - **Advance notice:** 48 hours
 - **Escort Provided:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** Flexible but suggest between 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. for lower costs due to lower traffic
-

RSVP Rides for Veterans

(781) 329-5728

https://www.norfolkcounty.org/departments/retired___senior_volunteer_program/rsvp_rides_for_veterans.php

Volunteer drivers provide rides for veterans to medical appointments.

- **Eligibility:** Veterans living in Norfolk County
 - **Cost:** Free. Rider responsible parking and tolls fees
 - **Advance notice:** One week
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
-

Senior Care Inc.

Senior Care's Medical Transportation Office:

(978) 281-1750

<https://seniorcareinc.org/medical-transportation/>

Free transportation guide for these communities is also available on their website at:

https://seniorcareinc.org/sc_transport.pdf

- **Eligibility:** Volunteers transport residents 60 years of age or older to local and out-of-town medical appointments. Must be resident of Beverly, Essex, Gloucester, Hamilton, Ipswich, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Rockport, Topsfield or Wenham.
- **Cost:** No but donation suggested and appreciated
- **Escort provided:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Varies

Somerville – Cambridge Elder Services

(617) 628-2601 (Ask operator for Medical Escort Program)

Volunteers provide rides for occasional or one-off escort needs, such as colonoscopies. Dependent on volunteer availability.

- **Eligibility:** Residents of Somerville and Cambridge age 60+ for appointments in Somerville, Cambridge and directly surrounding areas, including Boston/Longwood Medical Area.
- **Cost:** Free but older adults are responsible for any parking fees
- **Escort:** Yes
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Advance notice:** At least 10 days
- **Hours:** Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

In addition, clients in SCES home care programs are also often eligible for free transportation and escort support that is not dependent on volunteer availability. Interested persons should contact their SCES home care coordinator.

Somerville: Door to Door Transportation by SCM

(617) 625-1191

<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/health-and-human-services/council-aging>

- **Eligibility:** For residents of Somerville age 62 or older. See Cambridge: Door to Door Transportation by SCM for more details.

Somerville: Council (COA) on Aging Taxi Program for Seniors

(617) 625-6600 ext. 2319

Limited rides per week also available for grocery and pharmacy trips.

- **Eligibility:** Residents over age 60 or who have permanent disability but must be approved first. Can request rides to downtown Boston, Somerville, Cambridge, Arlington, Belmont, Brighton, Charlestown, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, VA locations in Jamaica Plain and West Roxbury
 - **Cost:** Free; one round trip ride to medical appointment per week
 - **Advance notice:** 2 days
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
-

South Shore Hospital Courtesy Coach

(781) 624-4350

www.southshorehealth.org

- **Eligibility:** Patients needing a ride to an appointment at South Shore Hospital or to a program or service directly affiliated with South Shore Hospital. The shuttle does not drive patients to physicians' offices.
- **Cost:** Free
- **Advance notice:** 1-2 weeks
- **Escort:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Springwell Medical Escort Program

(617) 926-4100

<https://springwell.com/service/medical-escort/>

Trained volunteers provide transportation and escorts, if requested, to older adults to and from medical appointments.

- **Eligibility:** 60+, must be ambulatory
 - Must be resident of Belmont, Brookline, Needham, Newton, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley or Weston
 - **Cost:** Suggested one-way donation of \$4; older adult also pays for parking & tolls
 - **Advance notice:** Minimum 2 weeks
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
-

VA Medical Shuttles

(781) 687-2505 or (857) 364-2446 to schedule a ride

<https://www.va.gov/bedford-health-care/programs/va-new-england-shuttle-schedule/#boston-shuttle-schedule>

Provides free shuttle service between VA Hospitals in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, Lowell and other locations.

- **Eligibility:** Veterans
- **Cost:** Free
- **Advance notice:** N/A
- **Escort:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** See schedules on website

Waltham Council on Aging Medical Van

(781) 314-3499

<https://www.city.waltham.ma.us/council-on-aging/pages/transportation>

Curb-to-curb transportation is available to medical appointments within Waltham only. (See Springwell for transportation to appointments outside of Waltham.) Residents having outpatient surgery must provide their own ride home. The Council on Aging also operates a shuttle that can take older adults to the pharmacy for prescriptions.

- **Eligibility:** 60+
 - **Cost:** Free but donations accepted
 - **Advance notice:** As soon as possible
 - **Wheelchair access:** Yes
 - **Hours:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
-

Waltham Council on Aging Taxi Voucher Discount Program

(781) 314-3499

- **Eligibility:** 60+
- **Cost:** \$5.00 for a book of \$10.00 vouchers. MassHealth subscribers receive a greater discount. Vouchers expire on June 30th of each year. The initial purchase, with proof of age, must be made in person.
- **Wheelchair access:** No
- **Hours:** Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Watertown Council on Aging

(617) 972-6490

<https://www.watertown-ma.gov/329/Transportation>

Rides to medical appointments are available in partnership with Go-Go Grandparent. Residents must call the coordinator on Tuesdays 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. to register. Once approved, residents will call Go-Go Grandparent to schedule the ride.

- **Eligibility:** Residents 60+
 - **Cost:** Free
 - **Advance notice:** Schedule directly with Go-Go Grandparent once approved
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** If scheduled well in advance
 - **Hours:** 24/7 after registered with Council on Aging
-

Wellesley Council on Aging Bus

(781) 235-3046

<https://wellesleyma.gov/396/Transportation>

- **Eligibility:** 60+ for rides within Wellesley and to select medical facilities such as Newton Wellesley Hospital, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital (Needham), and Metrowest Medical Center (Natick). Purchase tickets at the Council on Aging Office 219 Washington Street, Wellesley or call to have tickets mailed.
- **Cost:** \$1.00 each way.
- **Advance notice:** 72 Hours
- **Escort:** No
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes
- **Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Wellesley Council on Aging Volunteer Drivers Program

(781) 235-3046

Email: drive@wellesleyma.gov

<https://wellesleyma.gov/396/Transportation>

Volunteer drivers provide rides within Wellesley and in surrounding towns. They do not drive to Boston.

- **Eligibility:** 60+
 - **Cost:** Free
 - **Escort:** No
 - **Wheelchair access:** No
 - **Hours:** 24/7; 7 days a week
-

Taxi Services

Ambassador Brattle Cab

- (617) 492-1100
- Serves Cambridge, Boston
- Wheelchair access available

Bay State Taxi & Courier

- (617) 566-5000
- Serves Brookline, Boston and Cambridge
- Senior vouchers accepted
- No wheelchair access

Boston Cab Association

- (617) 536-5010
- <https://bostoncab.us/>

Checker Cab Co.

- (617) 497-1500
- (617) 497-9000 – primary phone number
- Serves Greater Boston
- No Wheelchair access

East Boston Tunnel Taxi

- (617) 567-2700

Green Cab & Yellow Cab of Somerville

- www.greenandyellowcab.com
- (617) 625-5000
- Serves Greater Boston
- No wheelchair access

ITOA Cab Association

- <https://www.itoataxi.com>
- (617) 825-4000
- Serves Greater Boston
- No wheelchair access

Metro Cab

- <https://metro-cab.com>
- (617) 782-5500
- Serves Greater Boston
- Wheelchair access available

671 TaxiCab, Inc.

- (617) 829-4222
 - (617) TAXI-CAB
-

Buses

Peter Pan Bus Lines

www.peterpanbus.com

- **Destinations:** Serves cities across Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Rhode Island, and beyond.

- **Discounts:** Senior discounts available.
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, but must request in advance.

Greyhound

www.greyhound.com

- **Destinations:** Nationwide service across major U.S. cities.
- **Discounts:** Senior and military discounts available.
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, accessible seating and assistance available.

Megabus

www.megabus.com

- **Destinations:** Serves major cities in the Northeast and beyond, including New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.
- **Discounts:** No specific senior discount, but fares start low when booked in advance.
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, but must be reserved ahead of time

Amtrak Thruway Bus Service (in coordination with Amtrak)

www.amtrak.com

- **Destinations:** Connects to Amtrak train services for long-distance travel.
- **Discounts:** Senior discounts available.
- **Wheelchair access:** Yes, but check availability in advance.

Ambulances

Brewster Ambulance Services

(617) 983-1000

www.brewsterambulance.com

- **Cost:** Limited covered – Accept MassHealth/Medicaid
- **Advanced notice:** One hour notice preferred, but not required. Depends on availability
- Pick up only from hospitals, not from home

EasCare Ambulance

(617) 464-1600

(617) 740-9200 - Main Number

(781) 562-3060 – Business Office

www.eascare.com/services

Escort provided: No

EasCare offers three types of EMS transport service:
(Please access the website for specific details).

- Advanced Life Support (ALS)
- Basic Life Support (BLS)
- Chair Car (CC)

Coastal Medical Transportation System

(508) 694-6687

<https://www.cmtsma.com>

- Emergency & non-emergency transportation service serving healthcare institutions and patients across New England.
- Wheelchair and walk-on transportation to and from their desired destination or event, for both medical and non-medical appointments.

Other Transportation Resources

Mass Ride Match

<https://massridematch.org>

Ride Match is designed to help fill the gaps and provide the state’s most vulnerable populations, and the agencies that serve them, with a way to easily identify all the transportation options within their communities. Entries on Mass Ride Match were last updated in late 2022. Ridematch may still be helpful for looking for transportation in other parts of the state or in communities not covered by this guide.

Gatra

<https://www.gatra.org>

The Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) can assist individuals living in Southern Norfolk County and Northern Bristol County, Plymouth County, and the South Shore. GATRA is the MassHealth(PT1) broker in certain parts of the Commonwealth and oversees operation of fixed route bus services in Attleboro and Taunton, as well as Duxbury, Kingston, Marshfield, Middleborough, North Attleboro, Norton, Plainville, Plymouth, Raynham, Seekonk, and Wareham. GATRA also provides same day, on-demand, and accessible curb-to-curb service, called GATRA GO, to the towns of Franklin, Foxborough, Mansfield, Norfolk, Norton, Pembroke, Plymouth, Scituate, and Wrentham.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts List of Volunteer Driver Programs

If you are looking for a program outside of Boston or MetroWest or any area not covered in this guide, you may want to check out the organizations listed on the website.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/volunteer-driver-programs>

Councils on Aging

For other communities not covered by this guide, contact your local council on aging to see if they offer transportation for older adult residents.



Ride Sharing Apps (Uber, Lyft)

Ride-sharing services connect passengers with drivers who use their personal vehicles to provide transportation. Except when ride sharing services have a special arrangement with a council on aging (as noted in the entries above), the price for these trips varies by location, time of day, and demand by riders.

The easiest way to use ride sharing is through a smart device such as a tablet or smartphone. Both uber and Lyft have an app you download where you can request a ride, track your driver's location and pay for your trip (credit card on file is required). Uber also allows you to request and pay for a ride by calling 1-833-USE-UBER if you do not have a smart device.

Below is an overview of the steps you take in using ride sharing services. There are also detailed guides, videos and workshops you can attend to show you how to use ride sharing apps that are listed at the end of this section. Some of these places also have drop in tech hours to assist you in person.

Overview of Steps to use ridesharing apps:

To get started:

- Download the app from Apple's App Store or Google Play Store
- Open the app to register, adding your contact information and a form of payment. This will need to be a credit card, voucher or gift card.

- Typically the app will send a text to your smart device to verify set up of the account
- The app should use GPS to automatically put in your pick up location wherever you are. You can also adjust this location manually.

To request a ride:

- Choose your destination and review the different ride types. For example, Uber offers several different types of vehicles (shared, individual, luxury, oversized) for different prices. The app will list the price and estimated wait time for each option.
- Confirm your selections to request your ride.
- The app will search for a nearby driver and once it is confirmed, you will see the driver's name and license plate.
- Make sure to confirm the license plate before getting into a vehicle once it arrives.
- If you need to communicate with the driver, tap "Contact" and you can call or message them.
- Keep in mind drivers do not wait long once they arrive at your pick up destination!

Need help using technology?

The following are some places you can get assistance online or in-person to help you set up or use ride sharing services. More and more places are offering older adults assistance with technology and there are likely additional places not listed here. Your local library, council on aging, or any organization offering tech training (often called digital literacy) is often a good place to start. If you find

new places, send us an email and we will update this guide on our website.

Brookline Senior Center (BSC)

617) 730-2777

<https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/services/tech-assistance/>

Detailed guide available online:

https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38275/Lyft_Uber-Guide_WEB?bidId=

BSC has several options and volunteers available to assist older adults with using more complex features on smart-phones, laptops, and tablets.

Boston Public Library

(617) 859-2323 or email computerworkshops@bpl.org

Silver Tech

<https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/66a260ec42fa12abcec77e61>

Offers general computer and technology classes at the main site and also some of its branches. In addition, Silver Tech workshops and individual tech hours, designed especially for older adults, are offered at some of its branches.

Cambridge Senior Center (CSC)

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/citycalendar>

Alicia Johnson: alicaj@cambridgema.gov

(617) 349-6220

- Tech assistance is available on site. Call for schedule.
- Additional assistance is available through the Cambridge Public Library System.

DOROT

<https://www.dorotusa.org/news-stories/tech-made-easy-for-seniors-with-new-instructional-guides/>

- Offers many Tech related instructional guides on their website.
- Included are user guides for using phone apps, zoom, and online shopping resources.

FriendshipWorks Friendly Helping Program

(617) 482-1410 ext.143 (currently in Newton only)

<https://fw4elders.org/what-we-do/friendly-helping.html>

- Vetted volunteers can assist you one-on-one with setting up or how to use a ride sharing service. The assistance is set up at a time that is mutually convenient for both the older adult and the volunteer, and is best done well in advance of needing to set up a specific ride.

Newton Senior Center (NSC)

Contact Ilana:

(617) 796-1670 or email iseidmann@newtonma.gov

- NSC has volunteer tech tutors to assist on an appointment only basis.
- Appointments are arranged mutually between the Tech Tutor and the student and held in-person at the Newton Senior Center during operating hours.
- Tech Tutors can meet between one to six times with the same student

Senior Planet

<https://seniorplanet.org/classes/>

<https://seniorplanet.org/on-the-go-with-ridesharing-apps/>

- Offers free, online or in person classes designed to teach older adults about Computers, Technology, Finance, Wellness, Fitness, and more.
- In person classes can be offered in Boston, Brighton, Hyde Park, Bourne, Falmouth, Wellfleet and more.
- They also offer many pre-recorded classes on their website.
- For more information, call the free Senior Planet Hotline: (888) 713-3495.

Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services

(617) 628-2601 or email info@eldercare.org

<https://eldercare.org/find-what-you-need/advice-info/tap-events/>

- The Technology Access Program offers in-home visits, skills workshops, drop-in sessions to older adults in Somerville and Cambridge.

All information was current at time of publication. Please contact the organization for the latest information.

We Thrive Together

<https://wethrivetogether.org/tech-training-hub/topics/ridesharing/>

Detailed instructions for using Lyft are available online.

The Carroll Center for the Blind

<https://carroll.org/seniors/technology-services/>

The Carroll Center for the Blind offers technology instruction (workshops and individualized instruction) that can help seniors with vision impairments learn to use technology independently. Programs are available for computers, iPhone, iPad, tablets, Microsoft Office applications, smartphones or braille technology.

YouTube Videos

Numerous videos on how to use Uber or Lyft can be found on the internet. Here are just a few:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9MwAh_jndA
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nYJgSLsK4c>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=OM0eO-DI3vw&t=1s>

Depending on your type of health insurance, you may be able to get free transportation especially if you are both Medicare and Medicaid (MassHealth) eligible. The transportation is often only curb-to-curb, meaning you should be able to get in and out of the transport yourself and not need further assistance. Remember that escort volunteers from FriendshipWorks are able to ride any transportation with you!

Anyone who is eligible for MassHealth can get free transportation. For example, if you have a Senior Care Options (SCO) health plan, the plan covers all of the services normally paid for through Medicare and MassHealth. This plan provides services, including transportation, to members through a senior care organization and its network of providers such as Commonwealth Care Alliance, Mass Health, Fallon Health NaviCare, Tufts Health Plan or United Healthcare. (For more information about Senior Care Option Plans see <https://www.mass.gov/lists/senior-care-options-sco-brochures>)

If you are MassHealth eligible, your healthcare provider will need to complete a PT-1 form (you may even hear the transportation referred to as PT1). It usually takes around 3 days to process.

You will receive a letter in the mail informing you that your PT-1 has been approved or denied. If you're approved, you will receive instructions from either MART or GATRA (contracted brokers with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) on how to set up your transportation. You can schedule your ride online, by telephone or by using

a mobile app. To learn more, download the MassHealth Transportation Consumer Brochure at: fw4elders.org/TGMassHealthBroch

What to know before you go

- Schedule your rides at least 3 days in advance
- Be ready 15 minutes before your scheduled pick up time
- Transportation service is curb-to-curb
- If you do not know your return time, you may have to wait up to 60 minutes for the transportation company to get a vehicle to your pickup location
- You can get a wheelchair accessible vehicle
- You can get a non-emergency ambulance service if your medical condition requires it
- Your medical provider can request that you have permission to bring a volunteer escort through the PT-1 form.

PACE Programs

PACE programs are Medicare and Masshealth publicly funded programs that provide all inclusive care. Services can include home health, homemaking services, adult day health, medical and dental care, and transportation to and from appointments. The goal of PACE programs is to help older adults age in place and remain independent. You must be 65 years of age or older, or 55+ if you have a disability on file with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Contact a PACE program for more information about eligibility.

If you get your healthcare through a **PACE program** (regardless of whether you receive free care or have a copay on your monthly premium), you are eligible for transportation to medical appointments at no cost. Your PACE team can arrange the transportation. You can still contact FriendshipWorks to have an escort accompany you if you wish!

If you are interested in learning more about PACE or to see if is a program in your area, visit: <https://masspace.net/organizations/>

The FriendshipWorks Programs

FriendshipWorks has been working to reduce social isolation through five critical programs that provide friendship, assistance, and emotional support to help older adults remain happy, healthy, and thriving in their communities. See our website fw4elders.org for a current list of service areas for each program.

Friendly Visiting

Friendly Visitors develop one-on-one relationships with older adults. They visit once a week to drink coffee or tea, share stories, go for walks or do errands together, or assist with small tasks. Over time, both people grow and learn from each other, often becoming great friends.

Medical Escorts

A “door-through-door” service where volunteers accompany individuals to medical appointments, providing personalized support before, during, and after the visit. We do not provide transportation but accompany people on their visits.

Friendly Helpers

Volunteers provide short-term assistance to older adults who have a specific need but no one to help them. Activities might include: helping with organization, seasonal tasks, errands, or picking up library books.

PetPals

This pet visitation program brings volunteers and their pets to visit older adults living in long-term care facilities.

MusicWorks

Musicians bring the joy of music to older adults in their buildings, offering them the opportunity to listen, engage, and participate in group activities that include singing, dancing, and playing instruments. Groups are weekday mornings or afternoons.

Have questions? Want to learn more? Want to make a referral?

- Complete a short form on our website at <https://fw4elders.org/get-involved/make-a-referral.html> or
- Call 617-482-1510 and follow the voice prompts for the particular program.



Important Telephone Numbers

Age Strong

(617) 635-4366

Boston Elder Info

(617) 292-6211

Boston 311 Non-Emergency Issues

(617) 635-4500

Mass Health

(800) 841-2900

Customer Service Center for transportation and to check eligibility.

SHINE

1 (800) 243-4636

Serving the Health Information Needs of Everyone Program. Call to find your local SHINE office.

Mass 211:

2-1-1

Emergency and Community Resources Hotline

Open 24/7.



FriendshipWorks

105 Chauncy Street
Boston, MA 02111

www.fw4elders.org
617-482-1510

 **FriendshipWorks**
Creating connections to end elder isolation.