

# GBT Access

Door-to-Door  
Public Transportation Service  
for Riders with Disabilities



Transportation Services  
under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



gbt

Effective: July 2014



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**GBT Access**

**Greater Bridgeport Transit  
One Cross Street  
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06610**

**gogbt.com • 203-366-7070 x 131**

***Effective: July 2014***







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# Welcome from the staff at GBT Access

Thank you for considering traveling with Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT). Our GBT Access service is designed to provide public bus transportation to riders with disabilities throughout the Bridgeport region. Access ensures that riders with disabilities who cannot use GBT's regularly scheduled bus routes have access to jobs, school, shopping and other important community services. This service is provided according to the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). Generally, Access services are provided in the same geographic areas, and during the same days and hours, as city bus service.

This booklet will provide you with all of the information you will need to determine if Access is for you. It will show the steps to take to become eligible and provide you with all of the information you will need to get started and make the best use of this service.

We know how important transportation is to you and how difficult it can be. Your mobility matters to us. If you have any questions while reviewing the information in this booklet, please feel free to call an Access Customer Service Representative, Monday through Friday at 203-366-7070, Ext. 131, 9 AM – 5 PM.

Thank you again for your interest in our service. We are looking forward to serving you.

# Introduction

Thank you for contacting Access. This booklet will take you through the steps to determine if Access transportation services are for you. It also explains how you can become eligible and how you can make the most of this service. Here is what to do:

1. Review the materials in this booklet to determine if GBT Access is for you. Are you likely to be eligible? Does the service go where and when you need to go? Will the city bus service work for you?
2. Complete the enclosed application. Explain why your disability prevents you from using GBT city buses.
3. Come in for a visit and meet our staff. Our staff will conduct an assessment of your ability to use GBT city buses. We will pick you up at your home and bring you (free of charge) to our offices for the assessment.
4. Receive your Identification Card. If it is determined that you are eligible, you will receive an Access Identification Card which you will need to make reservations and board the bus.
5. Call in your reservation. With your card, you may begin to make reservations by calling our Customer Service Representatives.
6. Get out and about!

# Where and When You Can Travel with GBT Access

## Service Area

The area that the Access buses serve is 3/4 of a mile around all GBT city bus routes. This generally includes all of Bridgeport and portions of Fairfield, Stratford, and Trumbull. There is also limited service to parts of Milford, Monroe, Shelton, Derby, Westport and Norwalk. If you are not sure if your trip is within this area, please call a Customer Service Representative at 203-366-7070, Ext. 131, 9 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday. The service area is planned this way to ensure that riders with disabilities have access to the same geographic areas as riders on the city buses and is an ADA requirement.

## Days and Hours of Service

The days and hours that the Access service operates are the same as city bus service. In the Bridgeport Region, city bus service is provided 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Weekday service is generally provided from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. There is reduced service on weekends and holidays. If you are not sure if Access operates when you need to travel, please call a Customer Service Representative at 203-366-7070, Ext. 131, 9 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday. The days and hours of service are planned this way to ensure that riders with disabilities have access to bus service during the same days and hours as riders on the city buses and is an ADA requirement. Our customer Service Representatives will be able to help you with the schedule when you are planning your trips.

## Weather Emergencies

In the event of a weather emergency, service updates will be posted to:

[goGBT.com](http://goGBT.com)

[facebook.com/GreaterBridgeportTransit](https://www.facebook.com/GreaterBridgeportTransit)

[twitter.com/gogbt](https://twitter.com/gogbt)

# GBT Public City Bus Service

Before applying for Access, you should know that GBT offers extensive city bus service throughout the Bridgeport region. All GBT city buses are equipped with wheelchair ramps and securement locations for wheelchairs. GBT drivers are trained in the safe use of all accessibility equipment and understand the needs and capabilities of riders with disabilities. For riders who are able to use GBT city bus service, it offers an additional measure of independence (no need to call for a reservation!) and is much less expensive. Below is a table which compares the average annual cost of using the city bus and Access services:

**GBT Bus Service - \$420 per year**

**GBT Access - \$1,827.00 per year**

Even if you are entitled to use the Access service, you may find the regular city bus to be more convenient for some or all of your transportation needs.

## Free Travel Training

If you are considering using the public city bus service, and are uncertain about where to begin, we can help. Through The Kennedy Center, Inc. GBT Access offers free travel training. Travel training is a series of one-on-one sessions offered by a professionally trained staff person with the aim of providing a rider with a disability, the independence needed to safely and conveniently use GBT's bus service. If you think travel training would be helpful to you, please call us at 203-366-7070, Ext. 131, 9 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday. We have successfully travel trained many riders in the Bridgeport area and most still travel on our buses.

# Are You Eligible for GBT Access?

Riders may be eligible for GBT Access service if they meet one of the following:

1. Any person who is unable, as a result of a physical or cognitive impairment, and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair) to board, ride or disembark from any public city bus.
2. Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment related condition that prevents them from traveling to or from a bus stop on the public bus system. Architectural and environmental barriers such as distance, terrain or weather, do not, alone, form a basis for eligibility. However, a person may be eligible if the interaction of the disability and environmental barriers prevent the person from traveling to or from the bus stop.
3. Individuals must apply for GBT Access transportation, attend an in-person assessment with a GBT Customer Service Representative and meet the above eligibility criteria before receiving transportation.

## How Do I Apply?

If you think you meet these requirements and would like to apply for Access transportation, please complete the application.

You will need to:

- Answer all of the questions to the best of your ability;
- Provide the name of a doctor who can verify information regarding your disability;
- Sign the application. Send to:

GBT Access  
710 Water Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06608

- Schedule an interview after receipt of notification letter;
- Eligibility will be determined within 21 days after interview.

# For What Types of Trips May I Use GBT Access?

GBT Access can be used for any trip purpose. Some riders will be able to use the service for any trips as long as the requested trip is within the service area and during the hours we are open. Others may be given eligibility under specific conditions. If this happens, our Customer Service Representative will explain it to you.

If you are not granted eligibility, the reason(s) will be clearly explained to you along with an appeals process that you may choose to follow.

If you have any questions while completing the application, please call 203-366-7070, Ext. 131, 9 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday. We're here to help.

## Identification Cards, Lost Cards and Recertification

Once eligibility is determined, we will mail you a photo identification card (we take your picture at the in-person assessment) and you are ready to go. Keep the identification card handy and safe. You will need your identification number when making a reservation and to board the bus. After you become eligible, GBT will recertify you every three years.



# Planning Your Trip and Traveling with Us

Once you are determined to be eligible, you are ready to take your trip. Here is what you need to know and do:

1. Know your pick-up and drop-off date and time;
2. Know your pick-up and drop off location –you will need addresses when calling for a reservation;
3. Have your identification card ready – the Customer Service Representative will ask you for your I.D. number;
4. You will need to know the phone numbers at your pick-up and drop-off locations, please share them with the Customer Service Representative;
5. Know the number of people traveling with you (if any);
6. Know if you will be traveling with a mobility device (wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane);
7. Know if you will be traveling with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA);
8. Have ready any special instruction for the driver;
9. Then – call an Access Customer Service Representative and make your reservation!
10. Before ending the call, please review and confirm the dates, times, and addresses with the Customer Service Representative, ensure it is correct and, if possible, make a note of it.

**“All of the men and women help you a lot.”**

## Reservation Hours

Reservations are accepted every day from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Reservations can be made as early as five days in advance of your travel date, but no later than 4:30 PM the day prior to your trip. The phone number for reservations, along with other important numbers, is listed on page 18.

## Change of Plans?

If you need to change your reservation, please call the reservation number as soon as possible. Changes to a reservation should be made at least one day in advance. Remember, your driver cannot make changes to your trip at the time of boarding.

**Reservations and Cancellations telephone:  
203-579-7777**





# Time to Go

When your travel day has arrived, here are a few tips to make your trip go smoothly:

1. Be ready and waiting during the time period your reservation agent tells you – you will need to remember your pick-up time from your reservation and will need to be waiting where the driver can easily find you. The driver will provide door-to-door assistance to doors at ground level and cannot enter the home of any rider at any time or lift a rider in or out of a vehicle.
2. The driver will wait up to five minutes for you after he/she arrives. After that, they must move on to their next pick-up.
3. Riders who are not available to board within five minutes after the bus arrives are considered “no-shows” (more about “no-shows” later in the booklet).
4. You will need to have your Access identification card and the exact fare or pre-paid ticket ready to present to the driver when boarding the bus.
5. Your driver will assist you in loading and unloading grocery bags. Drivers cannot carry bags from stores or into homes. You should take only as many bags/packages as you can manage – we recommend no more than three. Be sure that your bags do not block the walkways or use any seating needed by other riders.
6. Sometimes weather, traffic conditions, or unexpected events may delay the bus. If the bus has not arrived by the end of the pick-up time, you may call the Access dispatch office at 203-579-7777 to inquire about your ride.

**“All of the people are very helpful. From morning till closing they work to help us all.”**

# Fares

- The one-way fare is \$3.50 and must be paid in cash or pre-paid ticket at the time of boarding.
- Please pay the exact fare directly to the driver as drivers cannot make change.
- GBT Access ID card must be presented.
- If you are certified to travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), shown on your ID card, the PCA does not pay a fare.
- Other riders (friends/family) are required to pay a full fare.

Books of 10 one-way trip tickets may be purchased for \$35.00. Individual tickets are not available for sale. Checks or money orders may be made payable to "GBTA" and sent to:

GBT Access  
Attention: Accounting Department  
Pre-Paid Tickets  
One Cross Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06610

When purchasing pre-paid tickets, please enclose a self-addressed postage-paid envelope, so we can mail you your pre-paid tickets. You may also purchase the pre-paid tickets in person at our address stated above, Monday through Friday 9 AM – 4 PM. Ticket books may also be purchased from your driver. All tickets purchased are non-replaceable and non-refundable.

# Transfers into the Service Areas of other Transit Agencies

On some trips, traveling outside the GBT service area, your Customer Service Representative may ask you to make a transfer to another neighboring transportation agency, such as Valley Transit District, Milford Transit District or Norwalk Transit District.

## Transfers can be arranged by contacting:

To Travel Into:	Contact:	At:	Transfer at:
Shelton	Valley Transit District	735-6824	902 Bridgeport Avenue (Burger King)
Milford	Milford Transit District	874-4507	589 Bridgeport Avenue (K-Mart)
Westport and Norwalk	Norwalk Transit District	852-0000	1790 Post Road East (Super Stop & Shop)

GBT Customer Service Representatives will be happy to assist you with making the arrangements.

# Who Can Travel With Me?

It is sometimes hard to manage alone. Access allows others to travel with you, including Escorts and Personal Care Attendants (PCA).

**Escorts** – An escort is a friend or companion that you may want to take along on your trip. Escorts are required to pay the full fare.

**Personal Care Attendants (PCA)** – A PCA is a person who assists the eligible rider with daily life functions and may provide assistance during the ride or at the destination. The PCA does not pay a fare. Your PCA should be registered with Access.

Your Customer Service Representative must be informed that you will be traveling with an Escort or Personal Care Attendant otherwise, we may not be able to accommodate them.

All escorts and PCA's must have the same pick-up time, origin and destination as the eligible rider.

**"I was confused and exhausted but because of your friendly bus driver I found my way and didn't get lost – I found courage and was on my way for the day."**

# The Rider's Responsibilities

We need your help. The safety of our passengers and bus operators is our most important responsibility. To ensure safe transportation, Access requires the cooperation of riders in the following ways:

Riders who use a wheelchair or scooter are asked to:

- Maintain their wheelchair or scooter in good working order (i.e., brakes, wheels, and controls).
- Provide an accessible pathway to and from the entrance and the vehicle.

All riders are asked to:

- Follow all GBT Access policies regarding the service.
- Refrain from behavior or language which threatens Access operators, passengers and/or other individuals.
- Keep food and beverages in closed containers.
- Use headphones when listening to radios or other audio devices.
- Wounds must be covered and ostomy pouching systems secured.
- As a courtesy to others, smoking, drinking and eating are not permitted on any GBT bus.

GBT drivers may decide not to provide service if a particular situation poses an immediate hazard to the passengers, themselves or others.

GBT Access may limit, suspend, or deny service to riders who disregard policies, engage in unsafe, threatening, violent or disruptive behavior, or whose residence or destination is not safely accessible.

# Other Information

## Service Animals

You are welcome to travel with your Service Animal on GBT Access buses.

Remember to inform the Customer Service Representative when you are making your reservation. All riders are asked to show consideration for these working animals and their owners, who have the right to travel on Access buses.

## Minors Traveling on GBT Access

All riders under the age of 12 must be escorted by an adult. When scheduling a trip, please inform the Customer Service Representative that the young rider will be traveling with an attendant.

## Passenger Securement

- Access operators are required to use the four-point belt securement system and the over the center floor mounted seat belt to secure all wheelchairs and scooters. Your cooperation is required.
- Passengers who use wheelchairs and scooters are encouraged to use a personal lap belt.
- Passengers who use scooters are encouraged to transfer to a seat when possible.
- Infants and children with disabilities, who are not in a wheelchair, must be secured in one of the following ways, at the discretion of the accompanying adult:
  - Buckled into a car seat provided by the adult
  - Buckled into the seat next to the accompanying adult
- No standees! All passengers must be seated when the Access bus is in motion and are required to wear a seat belt.

## Not Ready, No-shows and Excessive Cancellations

When a rider is not ready for his or her trip, or is not available to rider after the bus arrives (no-show), the service and other riders suffer. Additionally, when a rider makes numerous reservations and then cancels them, he or she is holding service which could be used by another rider. Please remember this is a shared ride service, GBT has a process for tracking no-shows and late cancellations and a policy for addressing the problem which can include the suspension of service.

## Keep us in the Loop

Help us stay up-to-date. When you have a change of name, address, phone number, or other information important to our ability to provide timely service to you, please contact a Customer Service Representative. Without up-to-date information about you, we may have trouble meeting your needs.

**"My brother has special needs. He gets picked up from the Hawley Lane Mall in Trumbull and is dropped off at Goodwill in Bridgeport; his route is the reverse in the afternoon. I really appreciate that each afternoon the driver, Desi, gets out of the bus and personally escorts my brother safely across the parking lot to where I am waiting for him. Desi is not only a conscientious driver but a truly kind and caring person. Thank you, Desi!"**

# Customer Service

We care and want to ensure that your ride with us is enjoyable. If you are having a problem with our service we would like to know. Please direct all complaints and comments to our Customer Service Department.

**Telephone:**

203-366-7070 extension 131  
9 AM – 5 PM

**E-Mail:**

cstolze@gogbt.com

**Writing:**

GBT Customer Service  
710 Water Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

## Lost and Found

Please be sure to check around you before your exit to bus. Access is not responsible for lost or damaged items. If you leave an item on the bus, please call. If the item is found, you may schedule a next day ride to pick up the item. All lost and found articles are disposed of after 60 days.

**"I think all of your drivers are doing a great job getting all of us to different places."**



# Connecting Information

## **Peter Pan/Greyhound Lines**

[www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com)  
800-439-2985  
203-335-1123

## **New Haven Line Rail Service**

[www.mta.info](http://www.mta.info)  
800-638-7646  
800-724-3322 TTY/TDD

## **Shore Line East Commuter Rail Service**

[www.shorelineeast.com](http://www.shorelineeast.com)  
800-255-7433  
203-785-8930 TTY/TDD

## **Amtrak**

[www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)  
800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245)  
800- 523-6590 TTY/TDD

## **The Bridgeport & Port Jefferson Steamboat Company**

[www.bpjferry.com](http://www.bpjferry.com)  
203-335-2040

## **Norwalk Transit District**

[www.norwalktransit.com](http://www.norwalktransit.com)  
203-299-5170  
203-299-5173 TTY/TDD

## **CTTransit (Stamford)**

[www.cttransit.com](http://www.cttransit.com)  
203-327-7433  
203-327-2404 TTY/TDD

## **Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART)**

[www.hartct.org](http://www.hartct.org)  
203-748-2034  
203-748-2034 (TTY/TDD)

## **Milford Transit District**

[www.milfordtransit.com](http://www.milfordtransit.com)  
203-874-4507  
203-874-4507 TTY/TDD

## **Valley Transit District**

[www.valleytransit.org](http://www.valleytransit.org)  
203-735-6824  
203-734-4616 TDD

## **Greater New Haven District**

[www.gnhtd.org](http://www.gnhtd.org)  
203-288-6282  
203-288-7067 TTY/TDD

# Important Numbers, E-Mail Addresses and Our Website

## GBT Access

**Reservations and Cancellations telephone:**  
203-579-7777

**Comments and questions about eligibility telephone:**  
203-366-7070, Ext. 131

**Comments and questions about eligibility e-mail:**  
cstolze-loc@gogbt.com

**GBT Access Dispatch:**  
203-579-7777

## GBT City Bus Service

**Route and Schedule Information:**  
203-333-3031  
(between 6:00 am–6:00 pm Monday – Friday)

**Questions or Comments telephone:**  
203-333-3031

Questions or Comments email: [cstolze@gogbt.com](mailto:cstolze@gogbt.com)

**GBT Website:** [www.GoGBT.com](http://www.GoGBT.com)

**Address of GBT Administrative Offices:**  
Greater Bridgeport Transit  
One Cross Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06610

### Accessible Information

Information is available in alternative formats. Anyone needing service information in any accessible formats should call the Customer Service Department 203-366-7070, Ext. 131.























































































