



*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

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Achieve with us.

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2018 Update on Transportation Resources in Metro Boston Region By Julie Heffernan, Advocacy Alliance Coordinator and SUPPORTbroker

On Tuesday, March 27, 2018, a Summit on Accessibility was held at the Boston Public Library. Organized by Mayor Walsh's Commission for persons with Disabilities, the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT), and the Boston Region Planning Organization (MPO), the summit was an opportunity for people of all abilities who travel in Boston to provide input on accessible transportation needs; to learn about new innovations and speak with transportation professionals, including staff from the MBTA, the Ride, wheelchair accessible taxis (WAV), Uber, and bicycle and pedestrian planners; and to help shape the Boston Region's MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan.

The Arc of Massachusetts was pleased to participate in the summit and to learn about the resources and innovations available. Of particular interest to our constituents:

- 1) The **MBTA offers System Orientation Training designed to familiarize customers with disabilities and seniors with the MBTA's fixed-route network of buses and subways.** The training includes both a presentation and a hands-on section, and participants learn about trip planning, boarding and exiting buses and trains, and customer and operator responsibilities. Training is available for two types of small groups (one geared toward customers with disabilities and seniors and one designed specifically for customers with visual impairments) and is offered twice a month.

The MBTA also offers Travel Training, an individualized one-to-one or small group training on the safe use of public transit for some or

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all of one's travel within a public transit area. Travel training includes trip planning, bus schedule reading, safety skills, and other components of transit use, as well as actual practice using the bus and/or subway system to the destinations of the customer's choice. The Travel Trainer will travel with you while you gain skills and confidence, allowing you to learn at your own pace with reduced anxiety. For more information, contact Linda (lindasa@innovativeparadigms.com, 617-945-6176) or Kelley (kelleyc@innovativeparadigms.com, 617-583-3276).

- 2) **In July 2016, the MBTA gave its official endorsement to Transit**, an app which can be used on both Androids and iPhones. "Transit App utilizes the T's open real-time data, featuring upcoming departure times for all nearby transit, as well as a trip planner that shows you the best route to take. The app also has an offline mode that allows riders to access schedules even while underground, without data or service. And so you don't miss your stop, it also enables riders to set up notifications for stops on their route. The app further includes ride-hailing and bike-share options" (<http://www.wbur.org/bostonmix/2016/09/06/mbta-best-transit-app>).
- 3) Finally, the MBTA has a page entitled "Bus Service During Winter Storms" (<https://www.mbta.com/winter/bus-service-during-winter-storms?from=search>). On it, the MBTA lists snow routes and, during a storm, the MBTA posts an [alert](#) for each bus line that's running on its snow route. The page also provides information about the shoveling of bus stops and a method to report unshoveled bus stops (snowandice@mbta.com, customer support's main hotline number: [617-222-3200](tel:617-222-3200)).

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The Mayor's Commission on Disability is grateful for all the information it gathered at the Summit on Accessibility. It has also created other ways for residents with disabilities to share their feedback and thoughts on what can be done to improve access in the city of Boston. You may (anonymously and confidentially) fill out an accessibility survey online, by mail, or over the phone (www.boston.gov/disability, disability@boston.gov, 617-635-3682, TTY: 617-635-2541). Or, you may attend the Community Forum on Disability Issues at the Boston Public Library on Wednesday, May 23, 2018, from 2-4 PM. Finally, you may follow news about accessible transportation in Boston on Facebook (DisabilityBoston) or on Twitter (@DisabilityBOS, @BostonREgionMPO).

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