



## Rockland County Department of Public Transportation

### “TIPS” for TRIPS

#### WHAT IS REGULAR TRIPS SERVICE?

TRIPS is a curbside-to-curbside paratransit bus service for Rockland County residents with physical or mental disabilities, or senior citizens aged 60 or over, who find it difficult or impossible to use fixed-route bus service. TRIPS is a shared-ride public transportation system. Passengers may or may not go directly to their destination and there may be several pick-ups and drop-offs along the way. TRIPS operates only within Rockland County. TRIPS stands for Transportation Resources, Intra-county, for Physically disabled and Senior citizens.

Regular TRIPS service is provided throughout Rockland County six days a week, Monday through Saturday. Hours of operation are from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, and limited service on Saturdays. TRIPS does not operate on Sunday or on the following holidays: New Years Day, Martin Luther King Day, Lincoln’s Birthday, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Ride requests may be made Monday through Friday between 7:30 am and 5:00 pm by speaking with a member of the TRIPS staff. Requests left on our voicemail system will not be honored.

#### HOW CAN I OBTAIN A TRIPS CARD?

**For seniors:** Seniors may obtain an application for Regular TRIPS service from the Rockland County Office for the Aging or Department of Public Transportation or online at [www.rocklandgov.com](http://www.rocklandgov.com) (click on the bus). Upon receipt of completed application and being certified as a County resident aged 60 or over, the Department of Public Transportation will issue a photo identification (I.D.) card.

**For residents with disabilities:** Residents with disabilities may obtain an application for Regular TRIPS service from a certifying agency (listed below) or online at [www.rocklandgov.com](http://www.rocklandgov.com) (click on the bus). One of the following certifying agencies must review the application and provide certification before a numbered photo identification (I.D.) card can be issued:

- Jawonio – 634-4648
- Rockland County Association for the Visually Impaired (AVI) – 574-4950
- Alzheimer’s Association – 471-2655
- ARC – 267-2500
- Camp Venture – 624-3860
- Rockland County Department of Mental Health – 364-2374
- Mental Health Association – 268-1795

Residents with disabilities who do not receive services from any of the above agencies may obtain certification through:

- Rockland Independent Living Center – 624-1366

The final determination regarding eligibility for Regular TRIPS service for residents with disabilities rests with the certifying agency. Once certified, the applicant must bring the certification form provided by the agency to the Rockland County Department of Public Transportation (Building T, Yeager Health Complex, Pomona.) Upon acceptance, a numbered photo ID card will be issued.

*Note: Residents with disabilities may also qualify for ADA TRIPS service, which has more stringent eligibility criteria than Regular TRIPS service and requires a more detailed certification process. To apply for ADA TRIPS service, contact TRIPS Operations Coordinator Anthony D’Antoni at 364-2090. ADA applications are available online at [www.rocklandgov.com](http://www.rocklandgov.com) (click on the bus).*

The cost of the photo ID card is \$2.00. ID card photos are taken Monday through Friday at the Rockland County Department of Public Transportation located in Building T at the Dr. Robert L. Yeager Health Complex, Pomona, NY. The hours are from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Call the TRIPS Office at 364-8747 to schedule a group appointment for ID Photos.

TRIPS encourages all of its eligible riders to only use TRIPS when necessary, i.e., if you cannot use fixed-route bus services. Therefore, it should be noted that your TRIPS card also provides Reduced Bus Fare on the fully-accessible Transport of Rockland (TOR), TAPPAN ZEEExpress (TZx), Spring Valley Jitney and Clarkstown Mini-Trans bus services. It is also valid on Coach USA’s Rockland Coaches (Red & Tan) buses within Rockland County. Call 364-3333 for trip planning assistance or go to [www.rocklandgov.com](http://www.rocklandgov.com) for bus schedules.

**HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO RIDE?**

The cash fare for Regular TRIPS service is \$2.00 each way. Volume-discounted tickets may also be purchased from our drivers. A book of 10 TRIPS tickets

costs \$12.00 – a savings of 80 cents per ride. When paying for ticket books with cash, please have ready the exact amount, or make checks payable to the Commissioner of Finance.

## **HOW DO I REQUEST A RIDE WITH TRIPS?**

Ride requests may be made up to two weeks (14 days) in advance. We recommend that you call TRIPS at least two business days (48 hours) in advance of when you need to travel. When you call TRIPS at 364-8747 to request a ride, you will make your ride request with a TRIPS Call Taker. (Ride requests left on our voicemail system will not be honored). When you call for the first time after receiving your TRIPS card, you will need to provide the following registration information:

1. Your TRIPS card number (located on the front of your card)
2. Your full name
3. Your home address and phone number
4. Your cell phone number and email address (if applicable)
5. An emergency contact name and phone number(s)
6. If you need assistance boarding
7. If you use a wheelchair or other mobility device
8. If an aide, personal care attendant or service animal will ride with you

Once you have registered with TRIPS, you will need to provide the following information each time you request a ride with a TRIPS Call taker:

1. Your full name
2. Date of trip
3. Complete address and name of your destination
4. If you are going to a medical appointment, your doctor's name and phone number
5. Time you need to arrive at your destination and approximately how long you will be there
6. If an aide, personal care attendant or service animal will ride with you

## **Have paper and a pen or pencil ready!**

If TRIPS can accommodate your request, you will be given estimated pick-up time range and return time range while you are still on the phone. **Please be sure to write down your estimated pick-up and return time ranges and/or put them on your calendar.**

If TRIPS cannot accommodate your request, we encourage you to try changing the time of your appointment (or shopping, class, volunteering, visiting, etc.), if possible. The more flexible your schedule, the more likely it is that we can provide a ride for you. If it is not possible to change your appointment and you cannot make other travel plans, we can place you on a stand-by list, if desired. If a cancellation occurs and a bus becomes available for you, **we will call you** as soon as possible to let you know.

**IMPORTANT!**

- Please be sure to specify if you use a wheelchair, scooter, etc., if you will be riding with an aide or if you need any special assistance.
- TRIPS does not provide emergency service.
- Same day rides can sometimes be arranged if there is space and time available.
- During inclement weather, many doctor's offices, schools and businesses cancel appointments or close. It is important during these times to confirm that the appointment at your destination is still scheduled. Call your destination location to confirm and let TRIPS know right away if you need to cancel your ride. Delays and cancellations are also often announced on WRRCR 1300 AM or WHUD 100.7 FM.

**WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A RIDER?**

- **YOU MUST be outside and ready at least five minutes before your estimated pick-up time range begins.**
- Please do not call the TRIPS office to check on your bus unless the bus does not arrive within 15 minutes of the END of your estimated time range.
- For your safety as well as others, TRIPS strongly recommends that passengers wear seatbelts or shoulder harnesses provided onboard and mobility device lab belts while riding on TRIPS vehicles.
- NYS Law prohibits smoking onboard TRIPS vehicles. Eating or drinking onboard TRIPS vehicles is prohibited, unless medically necessary.
- Passengers on TRIPS must maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene to be eligible for rides. Failing to maintain reasonably acceptable personal hygiene standards can interfere with safe operation of the vehicle by the driver and with the use of the service by other passengers. Passengers failing to maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene may be subject to suspension.
- No pets are permitted, except service animals (i.e. guide dogs).
- TRIPS is a shared-ride service. Passengers may not play an audio device unless using a headset and must keep the volume low so that others are not

disturbed. Please also be respectful of the fact that you may be riding with passengers who may or may not want to have a conversation.

- Packages are allowed, but only what **you** can carry. Drivers are not allowed to assist with packages.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I NEED TO CANCEL MY RIDE?**

Please call as soon as possible if you must cancel your ride so that we may accommodate other riders. If you do not call to cancel and miss your ride, it will be considered a **“no show”**. Three **“no shows”** within a 30-day period may lead to a temporary suspension of your riding privileges.

### **WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?**

#### **CONDUCT**

TRIPS is a public transit service. Passengers are expected to act appropriately when using the service. Individuals who engage in or threaten to engage in violent, seriously disruptive, illegal, unsafe or seriously inappropriate conduct will be suspended from the service. Seriously inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to: acts of vandalism; physical assault of a driver or other passenger; verbal assault of a driver or passenger; inappropriate sexual behavior; or eating, drinking, or smoking in the vehicle.

#### **SUSPENSION POLICY**

If a passenger violates any safety or conduct policy, has a medical problem affecting safety, cancels more than six (6) scheduled rides, or has three (3) or more “No Shows” or three (3) or more late cancellations within a 30-day rolling period, the Department of Public Transportation may suspend the passenger if it deems necessary. The Department will notify the passenger with the reasons for the suspension and the length of the suspension. TRIPS suspension and grievance policies are available upon request.

- A “Cancellation” is when a rider calls to cancel more than one hour before their window start time.
- A “Late Cancellation” is when a rider calls to cancel less than one hour before their window start time.
- A “No Show” is when a rider fails to board the bus after the bus arrives at a destination for a pick-up. TRIPS buses will wait for passengers for two minutes after arriving at a destination.

## **Immediate Suspension**

If a passenger violates any safety or conduct policy, or has a medical problem affecting safety, and the Department of Public Transportation deems, at its sole discretion, that the passenger's conduct (or his/her medical problem) presents a danger to him/herself or other passengers or TRIPS employees, it will result in an immediate suspension.

## **Driver Assistance**

Drivers may only provide assistance to Regular TRIPS service passengers when boarding or leaving the vehicle and by fastening seatbelts, shoulder harnesses, and other securement devices. Drivers are not permitted to assist a passenger in traveling between the curb and their home or destination. If a passenger finds it difficult to get on or off the bus, they should tell the driver they would like to use the vehicle lift.

## **WHY ARE SOME RIDES ACCOMMODATED AND OTHERS NOT?**

It can sometimes be difficult to understand why some days TRIPS is able to accommodate requests and other days we cannot. There are many determining factors for this. For example, the number of requests for transportation varies from day to day. In fact, there can be anywhere from 200 to 400 requests made each day. The scheduling system is designed to route as many people as efficiently as possible.

Other factors include the time of your request, your destination, and how many people are going in the same direction as you. Additionally, the number of drivers and buses available each operating day is a factor. Buses may be unavailable because they are being repaired or scheduled for preventive maintenance, operators could be attending mandatory driver education training, or could be sick or on vacation.

## **WHY ARE THE BUSES SOMETIMES NOT CROWDED?**

We route our buses for maximum efficiency. This means we are constantly picking up and dropping off passengers. Remember - we are a curb-to-curb service. This means that we are not picking up groups of people along a specific route, or at a specific time. Each request is combined with other requests to establish different routes for each bus every day.

## **YOU ARE PICKING UP OTHER PEOPLE IN MY BUILDING, SO WHY CAN'T YOU TAKE ME?**

The bus may already be full, or your destination may be in the opposite direction of where other riders in your building need to go. If they have been scheduled to ride they expect to be at their destination within a certain timeframe, and driving

you in the opposite direction would delay riders on that route. Once we drop off a rider, we continue with the route to the next pick-up, which is usually located near the previous drop-off point.

### **WHY DO THE BUSES SOMETIMES RUN BEHIND SCHEDULE?**

TRIPS does run late at times due to reasons such as traffic, detours, accidents, breakdowns, weather and road conditions.

It is important for you to be on time for your ride because if we had to wait for each rider who is running 5 to 10 minutes late, the bus would fall severely behind schedule. This would be unfair to you and to other riders waiting for the bus.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

We know that there are times when riders must cancel a trip due to sickness or a change of plans. However, it is extremely important that you call us as soon as possible to let us know if you do not need to be picked up. By calling right away, we may be able to transport someone on the stand-by list whose request could not otherwise be accommodated.

The most serious problem TRIPS encounters is when a ride is scheduled and the rider is not there when the bus comes for them. This not only inconveniences drivers and staff, but also adversely affects fellow riders. This is a trip that someone else (maybe even you) could have used. TRIPS strives to use valuable driving time and available seating capacity as effectively as possible. We waste both when we encounter "no shows".

**We ask riders to please be considerate and remember to call us at 364-TRIP (8747) when you need to cancel a ride.**

This information has addressed the most commonly asked questions about Regular TRIPS service. We hope it has helped explain how we operate.

**Mission Statement: To provide safe, courteous, efficient public para-transit services to meet the needs of the people of Rockland County.**

Rockland County Department of Public Transportation  
50 Sanatorium Road, Building T  
Pomona, NY 10970

**To reach TRIPS, call 845-364-8747**