

# RIDER'S GUIDE

Effective December 2013



**360.427.5033**

**800.374.3747**

**TTY/TTD 711 or**

**800-833-6384**

**[masontransit.org](http://masontransit.org)**



# Contents

Contents . . . . .	2
Vision . . . . .	2
Mission . . . . .	2
Welcome to Mason Transit Authority! . . . . .	3
Choosing Your Option . . . . .	3
Days of Operation . . . . .	5
Selecting Your Route . . . . .	5
Flag Stops . . . . .	6
Scheduling Dial-A-Ride Service . . . . .	6
Dial-A-Ride Pick-up Windows . . . . .	7
Changing Ride Times . . . . .	8
Cancellations and No-show Policy . . . . .	8
Boarding and Leaving the Bus . . . . .	9
Tips for a Safe Ride . . . . .	9
Other Information . . . . .	10
Bikes on Buses . . . . .	10
Fares . . . . .	10
Inclement Weather . . . . .	10
Lost and Found . . . . .	11
Oxygen . . . . .	11
Parcels and Groceries on the Bus . . . . .	11
Personal Care Attendants . . . . .	11
Service Animals and Pets . . . . .	12
Strollers . . . . .	12
Travel Training . . . . .	12
Rider Conduct and Service . . . . .	13
\$100 Reward . . . . .	13
Providing Comments and Asking Questions . . . . .	14
Citizens Advisory Board . . . . .	15

## Vision

***We serve people through world-class transit.***

## Mission

***We provide transportation choices that connect people, jobs and community, increasing the quality of life in Mason County.***

# Welcome to Mason Transit Authority!

Mason Transit Authority (MTA) is proud to meet your travel needs by providing safe, affordable and reliable transportation. This guide provides helpful information on the many services we offer and tips on how to have a safe and comfortable trip.

## Choosing Your Option

MTA services are designed to meet the needs of everyone. We provide transportation throughout Mason County and also make connections with Grays Harbor Transit, Sound Transit and Intercity Transit in Olympia where access to Greyhound and AMTRAK is available. We connect with Jefferson Transit in Brinnon, Kitsap Transit where access to the Washington State Ferry system at the Bremerton Transportation Center is available, and Squaxin Island Transit at the Kamilche Transit Center near the Little Creek Resort just off Highway 101. Your travel options include:

- **Fixed Route Service** – Weekday and Saturday service going to the same locations at the same time.
- **Route Deviation** – Allows a limited distance deviation off of the regular bus route for those who experience difficulty getting to bus stops. Available on most routes depending on road conditions. Call the Customer Service Center a minimum of two (2) hours in advance for this service at (360) 427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747.
- **Dial-A-Ride (DAR) Service** – Service is available for customers who experience difficulty using regular routed service. There are no eligibility requirements. Anyone wanting the service can ride. Call the Customer Service Center a minimum of two (2) hours in advance to request a ride at 360-427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747.
- **Link Service** – Dial-A-Ride service that is limited to a geographic area and may be limited to time of day or day of week. This service can help you make connections to the regular routes.
- **Supplemental Service (commonly called the After School Activity service)** – Shelton School District, under contract with MTA, provides four (4) deviated

routes to the following areas: Hoodspout, Kamilche, Shorecrest, Timberlakes, Lake Limerick, Mason Lake and Cloquallum. This service is available Monday through Friday after 5:00 PM and only when school is in service. Call the Customer Service Center one (1) hour in advance to request a ride or for additional information at (360) 427-5033.

- **Volunteer Transportation** – Local volunteers use their own cars, on their own time, to transport persons 60 years of age or older who are unable to use regular transit to reach medical appointments. For more information on this program contact the volunteer coordinator at (360) 426-9434.
- **Vanpool** – A vanpool is a group of 5-12 commuters who ride to work together in a van provided by MTA. Vanpools generally follow a set schedule and route, but unlike a bus, these are set by the riders themselves. Vanpools must begin or end in Mason County. Fares vary based on travel distance, number of riders and, in some instances, are paid for by an employer's commuter reduction program. Fares cover all gas, maintenance, insurance and even vehicle washing. Whether you're interested in joining a vanpool or want to start one yourself, we can help you! Call our business office at (360) 426-9434 to speak with the operations coordinator.
- **Worker-Driver** – Express routed service to and from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) for day shifts. Routes originate in Shelton and Belfair. Call (360) 426-9434 to speak to the operations coordinator.
- **Community Van** – MTA leases four 12-passenger vans to local community organizations for uses that are designed to enhance economic development or for social service functions. Rates for leasing a van include a mileage and per day fee. MTA reserves the right to adjust rates or eliminate rates based upon decision of the Authority Board. Call our business office at (360) 426-9434 to request an application or for additional information.

## Days of Operation

MTA's transit system operates Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., and on Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Reservations for deviated service and Dial-A-Ride trips can be made between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Riders can call as late as 8:30 p.m. for information or to cancel a scheduled trip for the next day. Service is not available on Sundays and the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

**The transit system operates on Saturday service schedule when a Federal and/or State observed holiday falls on a weekday scheduled service day, such as Veteran's Day and the day after Thanksgiving.**

## Selecting Your Route

MTA provides service to the following areas:

- **Route 1** – Shelton to Belfair traveling along Highway 3 and Grapeview Loop.
- **Route 2** – Shelton to Belfair traveling along State Route 106.
- **Route 3** – Belfair to Bremerton via Old Belfair Highway and connecting with Kitsap Transit and Washington State Ferry at the Bremerton Transportation Center.
- **Route 4** – Belfair Loop service serving Belfair, south along Highway 3 to North Mason High School, and west along Highway 300 to Belfair State Park.
- **Route 5** – Shelton South Loop serves downtown Shelton, south through the Angleside and Hillcrest areas and north serving the Mountain View area.
- **Route 6** – Shelton to Olympia with connections to Squaxin Island Transit, Grays Harbor Transit, Sound Transit and Intercity Transit in Olympia which provides access to Greyhound and AMTRAK.

- **Route 7** – Shelton North Loop serves downtown Shelton, and neighborhoods and businesses north of downtown Shelton.
- **Route 8** – Shelton to Brinnon travels Highway 101 through Hoodspout with connections to Jefferson Transit in Brinnon.
- **Route 9** – Shelton from the Civic Center to Kneeland Plaza via Northcliff Road.
- **Route 10** - Shelton South Loop serves downtown Shelton, south through the Angleside and Hillcrest areas and north serving the Mountain View area.

Fixed route schedules, route maps and general information can be found in MTA's Transit System Schedule or on our website, [www.masontransit.org](http://www.masontransit.org).

## Flag Stops

If you live along a route, but are not close to a regularly scheduled stop, it may still be possible to have the bus stop close to where you wish to get on. Talk it over with the scheduler when you call. Together you can identify a safe location, where the bus can stop without creating a hazard, and where the driver can see you in plenty of time to stop. As the bus approaches, raise and lower your arm several times to catch the driver's attention. Be sure to stay back from the edge of the road to allow the bus enough room to pull off. During dark or foggy weather we suggest that you have a flashlight to wave so the driver can see you.

## Scheduling Dial-A-Ride Service

Call the Customer Service Center at (360) 427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747 to schedule your trip. Dial-A-Ride Service accepts reservations up to 14-days in advance and riders are encouraged to call at least 48 hours in advance to ensure a ride is available. MTA staff will try to accommodate same day requests received with a minimum of two (2) hours' notice. Because the Dial-A-Ride Service is shared with other riders, the scheduler may ask you to be flexible for your pick-up time in order to fit your request with already scheduled rides. The earlier you call and the more flexible you are, the more success the scheduler will have in scheduling your trip. If you have a firm appointment time, your trip can be scheduled to get you there on time. However, you may arrive up to 60 minutes early, but you will not be late for your appointment.

Allow plenty of time for your Dial-A-Ride trip. The driver will work to meet the schedules of all riders while responding to unplanned situations along the way.

If it is your first Dial-A-Ride request, you will be asked to provide the following information to the scheduler who will establish your customer file. Once your file is complete we request you let us know when any information changes.

1. Your full name and phone number.
2. Your complete pick-up address, including the building name or apartment number if applicable.
3. Your complete destination address, including a contact name and phone number whenever possible.
4. Your date of birth.
5. A contact for emergencies.
6. If you will be using a wheelchair, scooter, walker, or other mobility aid.
7. If you will be accompanied by an attendant or a guest during your trips.

The next step is to provide the date and time you would like to travel. If you have an appointment, be sure to provide the appointment time to the scheduler. When scheduling a trip, remember to schedule your return trip specifying what time you would like to return.

Although MTA will do everything possible to accommodate your first request, please have an alternative date and time ready.

**Dial-A-Ride Pick-up Windows** – The scheduler will give you a pick-up window. The driver will arrive any time within that window. Please be ready to board the bus at the beginning of your window. To ensure we are on time for other riders, once the driver arrives at your scheduled pick up location they will wait no more than 3 minutes before departing.

***Example:***

“Mr. Jones, on Wednesday November 13th you are scheduled to be picked up 123 W. Main St. between 7:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. and taken to Gateway Center. Please be ready to board the bus at 7:00 a.m.”

Being ready and waiting to get on the bus as soon as it arrives is very important and appreciated. The driver can

wait only three (3) minutes for you to board the bus. It is much easier to maintain the schedule for the day if everyone is ready to board as soon as the bus arrives at your pick-up location.

**Changing Ride Times** – If you need to change your ride, please use the following guidelines:

- Only the rider or person who scheduled the ride can change the appointment unless otherwise noted in the client's file.
- Provide at least two (2) hours' notice.
- Ride changes must be at least one (1) hour different from your original request.
- We will do our best to accommodate new time, but this may not always be possible.

**Cancellations and No-show Policy** – When a rider needs to cancel their trip at the last minute or does not show up for a pre-scheduled trip, it denies other riders the opportunity to use our service. Riders who schedule Dial-A-Ride or Deviated Fixed Route service trips and repeatedly no-show, or have excessive late cancellations, may be suspended from both services. If a trip is missed, the return trip is automatically cancelled. If MTA is closed cancellations can be made by leaving a message. To cancel Dial-A-Ride after hours, call the Customer Service number then press two (2) or remain on the line to leave a message. Leave your name, the date and time of your trip that you would like canceled.

MTA requires that you give at least two (2) hour notice if you are unable to take your ride. If you need to cancel more than one trip, be sure to tell the customer service representative the dates and times you are cancelling. Remember to cancel your return trip at the same time if it's not needed. If you cancel with less than two (2) hours' notice you will receive a late cancellation. Two (2) late cancellations equal one no-show.

If a rider no-shows three (3) or more Dial-A-Ride or Deviated Fixed Route trips in a 30 day period, they may be suspended from MTA service for a minimum of one (1) week. The second suspension will be for a two (2) week period; a third suspension will be for a three (3) week period, and so on. Each suspension increases by seven (7) days within a 12 month period.

Please be respectful of your fellow riders.



# Boarding and Leaving the Bus

All MTA buses are equipped with lifts or ramps to accommodate acceptable mobility devices. Riders find it very easy and convenient to use the routed service when using a mobility device. Drivers receive special training to safely assist you in boarding our buses.

MTA Drivers will call out stops and major intersections to help notify riders of their current location. When riding in a low-floor bus the driver will lower the bus and assist you onto and off of the wheelchair lift or ramp to meet your needs. Please ask for assistance if necessary.

## Tips for a Safe Ride

- Always choose the safest route to and from your bus stop.
- Cross streets at traffic lights.
- Use sidewalks whenever possible.
- Arrive at least five (5) minutes early to your stop for Fixed Route service.
- Stay back from the road and hold on to young children.
- If you are not at a designated stop, follow “flag stop” procedures which include an overhead wave.
- As the bus approaches, check the sign on the front of the bus or side window to make sure it is the bus you want. As you board the bus, ask the driver if you are unsure.
- When boarding or exiting the bus, let the driver know if you need assistance.
- Board through the front door unless you need to use the lift/ramp or require the bus to be lowered.
- If you use a power wheelchair or scooter, keep it in slow speed when boarding and exiting the bus.
- If going out of county be prepared to pay the exact fare at the time of boarding as drivers cannot make change, or show your MTA pass.
- Pull the signal cord or press the tape switch to alert the driver that you want to exit the bus at the next stop.
- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Take your personal items when you exit the bus. Alert the driver if you notice an unclaimed item on board.

- Watch your step while exiting the vehicle. Use the handrail and ask the driver to lower the bus if you are concerned about the distance from the step to the ground.
- After exiting the bus, wait for it to leave before crossing the street. Never cross in front of the bus.

## Other Information

**Bikes on Buses** – Most MTA buses are equipped with bike racks to carry two or three conventional single seat, two-wheeled bicycles. If the bike rack is already full, you may ask the driver if there is space inside the bus for you to store your bike. Approval will depend on the number of riders already on board and your destination. If the driver can accommodate you, the bike will be loaded in the wheelchair securement area. You will need to remain with the bike throughout the trip to ensure that it is secure at all times. If a person using a wheelchair boards the bus, you will be asked to move your bike to the outside if space is available or exit the bus.

When calling to schedule a trip, be sure to tell the scheduler that you will be bringing a bicycle. Riders are responsible for loading and unloading their bicycles. Make sure the driver is aware that you will be removing your bike when you exit the bus. Use extreme caution when leaving the bus stop and never cross in front of the bus. If you have any questions about how the bike racks operate, or you want to practice loading and unloading your bike before your first ride, let your scheduler know and assistance will be provided.

**Fares** – MTA provides free service within Mason County. Riders traveling outside the county or into Mason County from neighboring counties are required to pay a fare. Monthly passes for out-of-county riders can be purchased at multiple locations around the county, or by mail. Children that are six (6) years old or younger ride free when accompanied by a responsible person. Fares and locations where riders can purchase a pass are listed in the *Transit System Schedule*, on MTA's Website [www.masontransit.org](http://www.masontransit.org) or you may contact the Customer Service Center, (360) 427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747.

**Inclement Weather** – Mason County experiences severe weather which can affect bus service. MTA will make every effort to keep scheduled routes on the road, and provide Dial-A-Ride Service during inclement weather periods as long as vehicles are safely allowed on the roads. In some instances we may need to cancel your

trip if we have been notified that the facility you are going to has closed due to inclement weather. In the event of extremely bad weather or emergency related conditions, riders can listen to local news stations or check the MTA's website, [www.masontransit.org](http://www.masontransit.org) and click on "Rider Alert", or Twitter for updates on our service.

Please be aware that life-sustaining medical trips will have first priority during severe weather conditions for as long as vehicles are safely allowed on the roads.

Mason Transit provides service schedule changes and updates to the following local news stations:

- **KIRO AM 710 / FM 97.3**
- **KOMO AM 1000 / FM 97.7**
- **KMAS AM 1030**
- **KPLU FM 88.5**
- **KOMO-TV (4)**
- **KING-TV (5)**
- **KIRO-TV (7)**
- **KCPQ-TV (13)**

**Lost and Found** – If you leave an item on the bus, call the Business Office at (360) 426-9434 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or the Customer Service Center at (360) 427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747 during their hours of service. Every effort is made to return wallets, purses and medications as soon as possible. All other found items may be picked up the following business day after 10:00 a.m. Please call ahead to make sure the lost item has been turned in. MTA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

**Oxygen** – Oxygen may be transported on MTA vehicles. The driver will secure the oxygen tank on the bus, but cannot operate the tank mechanism. Please be aware that you most likely will be with other riders, so the trip may make multiple stops on the way to your destination. Riders are responsible for supplying an ample amount of oxygen for their trip.

**Parcels and Groceries on the Bus** – You may bring a reasonable number of items with you. No one item may exceed 40 pounds. For safety reasons, we cannot transport large items such as lumber, furniture or appliances. To ensure plenty of room for our riders, refrain from bringing items that cannot fit between seats or be secured. The number and the size of the packages should be manageable enough for you and/or your attendant to carry in a single trip. The driver is also able to assist you with one trip to and from the bus.

**Personal Care Attendants** – A personal care attendant is defined as someone who assists the rider with daily life functions and may provide assistance while traveling. A personal care attendant must be picked up and dropped off at the same location(s) as the rider. A personal care attendant rides for free on out-of-county service.

**Service Animals and Pets** – Service animals are welcome to ride on MTA buses. We would appreciate it if you would tell us in advance that a service animal will accompany you when you request your ride.

Service animals must behave as service animals (if not they may be asked to leave the bus), or they will need to be transported as pets.

Pets can be transported but must be in an animal carrier. Passengers are responsible for loading and unloading pets and service animals.

**Strollers** – Children in strollers are welcomed to ride on MTA buses. However, the stroller must be placed in the wheelchair area of the bus. Please make sure the aisle is clear and accessible for other riders. When possible, adults are asked to remove the child from the stroller, fold the stroller and place it safely under the seat. The adult can then hold the child for the remainder of the trip. If a rider using a wheelchair boards the bus, it may be necessary for the adult, child and stroller to relocate to allow the wheelchair to be secured.

**Travel Training** – MTA offers free travel training for anyone who may feel unsure about riding the bus. The training is customized to meet each person's needs such as reading the schedule, boarding the bus, etc. Group presentations, in English and Spanish, are also available. Please call (360) 427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747 for information.

## Rider Conduct and Service

**For Your Safety** – After exiting the bus, **ALWAYS** cross the street to the rear, not in front of the completely stopped bus.

**For your Security** – For your protection, activities on and around MTA vehicles may be visually and audibly recorded.

**Bus Conduct** – As a courtesy to and for the safety of everyone:

- Please follow all driver instructions.
- Treat MTA staff, drivers and other riders with courtesy and proper social behavior.
- Refrain from using vulgar or offensive language. Do not disturb others by engaging in loud, unruly, harmful or harassing behavior.
- Please use your quiet voice while riding.
- No open containers of alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed on Mason Transit buses.
- Hazardous materials, including corrosives (batteries), fireworks, flammable liquids, explosive materials, uncovered glass or potentially sharp/breakable objects are prohibited on MTA buses.
- All animals (except service animals) must be in a pet carrier.
- Do not distribute literature or petitions to other passengers.
- Eating or drinking is NOT allowed on MTA vehicles.
- Smoking is prohibited onboard MTA vehicles and within 25 feet from bus stops and bus shelters.
- Prohibited behavior may result in immediate suspension of service.
- It is unlawful to damage MTA property. Please report vandalism or damage to the driver or call the MTA Business Office at (360) 426-9434 or Customer Service Center at (360) 427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747.

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) addresses some crimes that are specific to the transit system. Sections of the Code that apply to MTA are RCW 9A.36.031 – Assault in the Third Degree, and RCW 9.91.025 – *Unlawful Transit Conduct*.

**\$100 Reward** – Mason Transit Authority will pay a \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person(s) who damages or vandalizes MTA property. To report damage or vandalism, call the Shelton Police Department at (360) 426-4441 if the crime occurs in Shelton, or the Mason County Sheriff at (360) 427-9670 or (360) 275-4467, ext. 313 for crimes in Belfair or other unincorporated areas.

**Providing Comments and Asking Questions** – The employees at MTA are committed to providing an ongoing, friendly, safe, convenient and reliable transportation system. We welcome your comments and questions! Mason Transit Authority seeks to continuously improve its services by encouraging comments from riders, staff and members of the community. Comments and questions may be submitted to MTA in person, telephone, fax, e-mail or mail. In addition, comment cards are available on every bus and can be given to the driver or mailed. The quality of service delivered to persons submitting comments or asking questions will not, in any way, be negatively impacted by a submission.

Concerns or complaints will be investigated and evaluated by MTA staff. Your comment will be acknowledged within three (3) business days if you have provided your telephone number, home or e-mail address. MTA will provide a response, if requested, with fifteen (15) business days. Compliments regarding staff will be forwarded to the individual and his/her supervisor for acknowledgement. Agency compliments will also be forwarded to the General Manager or his/her designee.

To make a comment about MTA contact us at:

Mason Transit Authority  
790 E. Johns Prairie Road  
Shelton, WA 98584  
Phone: (360) 426-9434  
Fax: (360) 426-0899  
E-mail: [mta@masontransit.org](mailto:mta@masontransit.org)  
Website: [www.masontransit.org](http://www.masontransit.org)  
(click on "Your Comments Count")  
Business Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

***Customer Service Center/Information***

360-427-5033 or 1-800-374-3747  
TTY/TDD 711 or 1-800-833-6388  
Fax: (360) 426-1153

***Customer Service Hours for Ride Requests***

Monday - Saturday  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

***Customer Service Hours for Information/Ride Cancellations***

Monday - Saturday  
8:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Citizens Advisory Board**

The Mason County Transit Advisory Board (MCTAB) is an advisory group comprised of people residing within the boundaries of the Authority. Advisory Board members serve a two-year term and are selected to achieve diversity and geographical representation. The Advisory Board promotes and facilitates public involvement in the planning process by reviewing and making recommendations on issues and projects to the Authority Board. Advisory Board meetings are held once a month.

Individuals who are interested in the service and development of MTA, and would like to be considered for membership in MCTAB are encouraged to fill out an application. Please call or e-mail us for details at (360) 426-9434 or [mta@masontransit.org](mailto:mta@masontransit.org).



790 E. Johns Prairie Road  
Shelton, WA 98584

[www.masontransit.org](http://www.masontransit.org)