



A Rider's Guide to

Transit Link



Regional dial-a-ride transit service in the seven-county metro area

A service of the



Metropolitan Council

July 2010

Transit Link is:

- **Public transportation** where regular transit route service is not available.
- **Minibus or van service** for the general public that must be reserved in advance.
- **Curb-to-curb service**, with limited assistance. Riders may ask drivers for assistance with up to four grocery-sized bags. ADA-certified passengers may ask for door-to-door assistance, but drivers are not allowed to provide any further assistance, both for their safety and for yours.
- **A service of the Metropolitan Council**, the regional planning agency for the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Council is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor. Council meetings are held at 390 Robert Street North, St. Paul, and are always open to the public. For more information, visit www.metrocouncil.org.
- **Provided by several different transportation operators**, but available throughout the metro area.

Please note:

Transit Link is not Metro Mobility service. For more information on Metro Mobility, visit www.metrocouncil.org or call 651-602-1111.

Transit Link Service Areas



Anoka/Ramsey: All of Anoka County and the Ramsey County communities of Arden Hills, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Mounds View, New Brighton, Roseville, St. Anthony, and Shoreview.

Carver/Scott: All of Carver and Scott counties

Dakota: All of Dakota County

Hennepin: All of Hennepin County

Ramsey/Washington: All of Washington County and the Ramsey County communities of Gem Lake, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, North St. Paul, St. Paul, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township.



Transit Link riders should:

- Be ready to board within 3 minutes of the scheduled pickup
- Show courtesy and respect to other customers
- Adhere to safety rules and service requirements
- Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus

Transit Link riders can expect:

- A safe and reliable ride
- Courteous and professional customer service staff
- Professional, well-trained drivers
- Drivers with identification badges, who are appropriately dressed and groomed
- A properly maintained vehicle free of smoke and litter
- A shared ride, meaning other customers may be picked up and dropped off while you are on board
- The bus to arrive within 30 minutes of the scheduled pickup time – if your ride is scheduled at 1 p.m., the bus will pick you up between 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Riding Transit Link

Eligibility

Transit Link is available in parts of the region not served by frequent regular transit routes. Anyone may use **Transit Link**.

Each trip must be scheduled in advance; when you call to reserve a trip, reservationists will help determine whether your trip is eligible for **Transit Link** service.

If you are near a regular transit route and you can reach your destination by regular transit routes, your trip will likely not be eligible for **Transit Link**. Trip origins and destinations must be more than ¼-mile from regular transit from November to March and more than ½-mile from regular transit from April to October to be eligible for **Transit Link**.

Transit Link will not provide rides shorter than the seasonal walking distances.

Riders who are physically unable to walk to a transit stop may qualify for Metro Mobility service. For more information on how to apply, call Metro Mobility at 651-602-1111 or visit the web site at www.metromobility.org.

Reaching Your Destination

Riders can use **Transit Link** to reach destinations anywhere in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. Some trips will involve a combination of **Transit Link** service and regular routes, while others will be completely on **Transit Link** buses.

Regular routes are either bus or light-rail routes that are operated on a regular schedule with specific destinations and stops. Examples include the Hiawatha light-rail line, Metro Transit bus routes, or commuter routes operated by suburban providers such as MVTA or Southwest Transit.

For example, a rider going from Shoreview to downtown Minneapolis may take **Transit Link** to a hub, such as Rosedale Shopping Center, and ride the rest of the way on a regular route. Or, someone traveling from Rogers to Champlin may use **Transit Link** because no regular routes connect those two cities.

Reservationists will be able to help walk you through each leg of your trip. If you have questions about Metro Transit, start with the Transit Information Center – representatives will transfer you to **Transit Link** staff if you can't reach your destination on a regular route. Call 612-373-3333.

Service Times

Transit Link is available from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. Some areas may have extended service hours during the week or weekend service available. Contact **Transit Link** at **651-602-LINK (5465)** for more information.

Scheduling a Ride

To schedule a ride, call **Transit Link** at **651-602-LINK (5465)**. You will first be asked in which county your ride will begin. Once you select your county, you will be transferred to a reservationist who can process your request.

You will be asked a number of questions, including:

- Trip date and time
- Pick-up address
- Destination address

Also be sure to tell the reservationist if you are traveling to an appointment and the appointment time, as well as if you are traveling with a personal care attendant, or if others are accompanying you.

For a ride on ...	Call as soon as the previous...
Monday	Monday
Tuesday	Tuesday
Wednesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Thursday
Friday	Friday
Saturday (subject to local availability)	Friday
Sunday (subject to local availability)	Friday

Note: do not leave a message to schedule a ride in the general Transit Link voicemail box – it is only checked a few times each day. You must speak to a reservationist to schedule a ride.

Children under age 5 may ride free on Transit Link. One adult may bring up to four children on the bus. Children age 10 and older may ride on Transit Link unaccompanied by an adult.

Holidays

Transit Link service will not be available on Thanksgiving Day or Christmas Day.

Standing orders will automatically be canceled, unless the passenger requests otherwise, on the following holidays: New Year's Day observed, Memorial Day, Independence Day observed, and Labor Day.

Reservations

Rides may be reserved up to five business days in advance of the trip. Reservations are taken from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Same day rides may be scheduled, but there must be at least two hours between the time the rider

calls to reserve the ride and the desired pickup time, subject to availability.

Note: do not leave a message to schedule a ride in the general Transit Link voicemail box – it is only checked a few times each day. You must speak to a reservationist to schedule a ride.

Pickups

Transit Link drivers will arrive within 30 minutes of the scheduled pickup time. If the scheduled pickup time is 1 p.m., the vehicle will arrive between 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m., and will be considered “on time” within that timeframe.

If a vehicle arrives before the beginning of the 30-minute pickup window, you do not have to board the bus until your scheduled time. However, the bus will only wait for 3 minutes into the pickup time. Therefore, if the pickup time is 1 p.m. and the bus arrives before 1 p.m., the passenger must board the vehicle by 1:03 p.m. to avoid a “no show.”

Fares

Fares for **Transit Link** trips are based on the total trip distance.

Distance	Fare (each way)
Less than 10 miles	\$2.25
10 to 20 miles	\$4.50
Greater than 20 miles	\$6.75

Riders that are transferring to another service will pay their fare on the first service they board. A transfer will be issued worth the amount paid, but used toward the fare of the transfer ride. ADA-certified passenger fares will be capped at \$4.50

each way. Fares for group trips will be eligible for discounts (see “Group Trips”).

In many cases, transfers will be free. For example, if you’re traveling from Woodbury to downtown St. Paul, the trip is about 10 miles. Because there is frequent regular bus service to downtown St. Paul from Sun Ray Transit Center, you will likely be asked to transfer there. So the **Transit Link** bus will pick you up in Woodbury, you’ll pay your fare on that bus, and receive a transfer that will pay for your trip downtown. On the return trip, you’ll start on a Metro Transit bus, receive a transfer and hand that to the **Transit Link** driver when you board at the Sun Ray center.

If your initial fare did not cover the full fare for the trip, you would be asked to pay the difference. Reservationists will assist you with information about the fare you will pay on your trip.

Passengers can pay fares with ride coupons (worth \$2.25) or by paying cash. **Transit Link** fare coupons can be purchased from your service provider. Drivers are not allowed to make change for cash-paying customers.

Go-To Cards and Metropasses are not currently accepted on **Transit Link** trips.

Canceling a Ride

Customers who need to cancel a scheduled ride (including a standing order ride – see “Standing Orders”) should call **Transit Link** as soon as possible to cancel, but no later than one hour prior to the scheduled ride.

Do not leave a message to cancel a ride in the general **Transit Link** voicemail box – it is only checked a few times each day. You must speak to a reservationist to cancel a ride or face a “no-show” on your record (see below).

Group Trips

Group trips may be arranged and scheduled. Groups large enough may qualify for a discount. Call **Transit Link** at **651-602-LINK (5465)** for specific information about arranging group trips.

Distance	Group Discount
Less than 10 miles	Groups of 4 or more qualify for a free return trip
10 to 20 miles	Groups of 3 or more qualify for a reduced fare of \$2.25 each way
More than 20 miles	Groups of 3 or more qualify for a reduced fare of \$4.50 each way

No Shows

Failing to cancel a ride at least one hour before it is scheduled will result in a “no-show.” Three “no-shows” within 30 days will result in a warning letter. Additional “no-shows” in the next 30 days will result in suspension from service and termination of the standing order. If there is a no-show on an outgoing trip, the return trip will automatically be canceled.

Passengers may dispute a “no show” or suspension after receipt of a warning or suspension letter by calling **Transit Link**.

One suspension	No rides for 2 weeks
Two suspensions (within 12 months)	No rides for 4 weeks
Three or more suspensions (within 12 months)	No rides for 6 weeks

Standing Orders

Passengers who schedule regular trips to work,

medical appointments, or other activities may apply for a standing order. Standing orders are automatically scheduled trips each day, several times a week, or the same day and time each week.

Standing orders are reviewed as they are received and placed on the schedule if space is available. Standing orders are limited to 75 percent of trips in a service area during any hour of the day.

Customers with standing orders must cancel trips no less than one hour before scheduled pickup time. Failing to cancel a standing-order trip at least one hour in advance of the scheduled pickup time will be considered a “no-show.” Three “no-shows” within 30 days will result in a warning letter. Additional “no-shows” in the next 30 days will result in a service suspension, and termination of the standing order.

If a rider is a no-show for two consecutive standing-order trips in a row, all future rides will be suspended, and a customer service representative will attempt to contact the rider. (Typically this happens if a rider goes on vacation and forgets to cancel standing orders for a week.) The standing order will remain suspended until the rider responds that he or she wants to keep the standing order active. If the customer does not respond within 30 days, the standing order will be deleted. Riders may re-apply for a standing order.

Standing order rides will automatically be canceled, unless the passenger requests otherwise, for the following holidays: New Year’s Day observed, Memorial Day, Independence Day observed, and Labor Day.

For more information on how to apply for a standing order, contact **Transit Link** at **651-602-LINK (5465)**. At the prompt select the county in which you reside.

Transfers to Other Transit

Transfers to other transit within the metro area from **Transit Link** will often be free. Under any circumstance, the second leg of the trip will always recognize the fare value already paid. (**Note:** additional upgrade charges may be required when transferring from **Transit Link** to the Northstar Line or to peak express service. If the **Transit Link** fare is less than the fare for the Northstar Line or peak express service, the passenger must pay the difference).

Transit Link passengers will only be asked to transfer from **Transit Link** to regular route transit at transit hubs and park-and-ride facilities, with amenities such as ample lighting, frequent regular route service, and shelter facilities for passengers.

Examples include Brooklyn Center Transit Center, Cottage Grove Park and Ride, Foley Boulevard Park and Ride, Mall of America, Maplewood Mall, Ridgedale Mall, Rosedale Mall, and Sun Ray Shopping Center.

Driver Assistance and ADA Service

Transit Link is public, dial-a-ride transit; it is not Metro Mobility. All **Transit Link** vehicles are equipped with lifts that meet or exceed the minimum ADA standards, so ADA-certified riders may use **Transit Link** to connect to the Metro Mobility service area. In addition, ADA-certified riders using **Transit Link** outside the Metro Mobility service area may request door-to-door assistance. Passengers should request additional assistance when reserving a ride.

Mobility devices, such as scooters or motorized wheelchairs, may not be larger than 30 inches wide or 48 inches long, nor exceed 600 pounds total weight (including weight of the device and the passenger) on either **Transit Link** or Metro Mobility vehicles.

Drivers will not provide assistance with mobility devices. If you need assistance with a mobility device, bring a personal care attendant with you. ADA-certified passengers may bring a personal care attendant on **Transit Link** for free. Be sure to let the reservationist know when you schedule a ride that you are bringing a personal care attendant with you.

Animals

Service animals, including therapy

Metro Area Transit Hubs



animals, are always welcome on **Transit Link**. The animal must be under the control of the rider throughout the trip, and while boarding and exiting. Drivers or other passengers may not control the animal at any time. Service animals may sit on the floor or in the rider's lap. Service animals may not sit in a passenger seat.

Riders may bring pets on **Transit Link** buses if there is space and the animal is properly caged.

Resolving Service Problems

Transit Link takes all reported complaints and incidents very seriously. We are committed to providing you the highest possible level of service.

If you spend more than 90 minutes on the bus or if you are picked up more than one hour after the established pickup time, you may receive a free ride.

If you have a complaint about **Transit Link** service, we want to hear from you. Your first step is to contact the vendor that provides the service for your area. Comment cards are available on all **Transit Link** buses. If you don't see one, ask the bus driver.

If you feel the vendor did not sufficiently resolve your concern, please contact the Metropolitan Council by calling **Transit Link** at **651-602-LINK (5465)** and press "9" to leave a message in the customer comments voicemail box. Do not leave a message to schedule or cancel a ride in the general **Transit Link** voicemail box – it is only checked a few times each day. You must speak to a reservationist to schedule or cancel a ride.

You may also submit comments about service via email to TransitLink@metc.state.mn.us. Staff will investigate and respond within five business days.

Tips for Riding

Transit Link

Trips are available on a first-come, first-served basis. It's best to reserve rides at least a few days in advance to assure availability.

Transit Link is a shared ride. The driver may need to drop others off before reaching your scheduled destination.

Encourage neighbors and friends to **schedule trips as a group** or to combine errands into single trips.

Groups receive discounted fares, and group trips help **Transit Link** to run more efficiently.

Cancel rides promptly. If you don't cancel a ride at least one hour prior to the scheduled pickup time, it is logged as a "no-show" and you may lose

Transit Link privileges.

If you're going to a **scheduled appointment**, let the reservationist know so you are sure to get to your appointment on time.

Be ready to board the bus when it arrives.

If you live in a multi-unit building, wait inside the main or designated entrance at your pickup time.

Have the correct fare ready before the driver arrives. Drivers will accept cash, but do not provide change. The reservationist will tell you your fare when you schedule your trip.

Have a question? Reservationists are trained to provide information or connect you with someone who can answer your question. Ask them if you're unsure about any aspect of your **Transit Link** ride.

