

Tip Sheet:

Getting Help with Transportation

Having cancer can be stressful and affect many aspects of your life. In addition to medical decisions and worries, you also have practical matters to think about, such as how to get to and from Dana-Farber for your appointments.

Resource specialists are available to guide you; call 617-632-3301.

For directions and parking information, see the **Getting to Dana-Farber and Places to Stay** tip sheet.

You'll also find information at www.dana-farber.org/directions.

Local travel

If you are worried about finding and/or paying for transportation to medical appointments, call 617-632-3301 to speak with a resource specialist. We may be able to help you find services in your community.

THE RIDE

Based on where you live, you may qualify for low-cost transportation through the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) THE RIDE program. The cost can vary, depending on where you are travelling from. THE RIDE offers door-to-door, shared rides to people of all incomes who can't use regular public transportation because of a disability or a medical need. It operates year-round in 60 cities and towns in Massachusetts.

- A Dana-Farber resource specialist can help you apply to use THE RIDE immediately for 30 days based on medical need.
- If you have a personal care attendant (PCA) or a friend or family member acting as a PCA to assist you with travel and/or your appointment, she or he may accompany you for free. One additional guest may join you but must pay the fare.
- If you use THE RIDE for more than 30 days, you will need an in-person interview at THE RIDE Eligibility Center in Charlestown (570 Rutherford Ave., Boston). Call 617-337-2727 to set it up. The center can arrange free transportation to and from the interview for applicants and up to one companion. Visitor parking is also available.
- THE RIDE usually reviews your application within 21 days. If it does not, you are entitled to service until a decision is made. If you disagree with the decision, you have the right to appeal.
- Visitors to the Boston area who wish to use THE RIDE can call the eligibility center at 617-337-2727 or email theride@mbta.com. The Americans with Disabilities Act allows you to travel as a visitor for 21 days in a 12-month period.

Councils on Aging, Elder Services

These agencies, located in communities around Massachusetts, may provide medical vans into Boston on certain days. Ask your local Council on Aging about transportation services.

Road to Recovery

This American Cancer Society program provides volunteer drivers who take cancer patients to and from their medical appointments. Call 800-ACS-2345 (800-227-2345) to find out if Road to Recovery is available in your community or visit www.cancer.org and search for "Road to Recovery."

Medical Shuttles

Several regional transit authorities run medical shuttles to Boston-area hospitals from communities north, west, and south of Boston, and Cape Cod and the islands. Call 617-632-3301 to speak with a Resource Office, contact the regional transit authority in your area, or visit www.mass.gov/service-details/health-care-transportation. You can also call Dana-Farber's Shapiro Center at 617-632-3750 to learn about shuttles that serve Dana-Farber and Partners locations.

MassHealth transportation

If you have MassHealth Standard, MassHealth CommonHealth, or MassHealth CarePlus through MassHealth (the state's Medicaid program for low-income and disabled adults and children), you may be able to receive free transportation to your medical appointments, as well as emergency ambulance services if needed. The benefit, sometimes called "PT-1," covers door-to-door car or van transportation for you (the patient) and an escort.

- Cancer patients with weakened immune systems can travel on their own instead of sharing the vehicle with other patients. MassHealth transportation services are usually limited to patients who don't have access to either public or private transportation.
- A Dana-Farber resource specialist can help you request this service, call 617-632-3301.
- After you've been approved (this usually happens in under 48 hours), you can call and arrange your rides directly. Find information on MassHealth transportation at www.mass.gov/service-details/covered-services#trans.

MassHealth public transportation reimbursement

If you can take public transportation (bus, subway, trolley, commuter rail) but the cost is too much, you may be eligible for reimbursement if your treatment is covered by either MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth Insurance. This is how it works:

1. Keep your receipts!
2. Submit your application for reimbursement to MassHealth Transportation Authorization Unit by fax (617-988-2925) or by mail to PO Box 45, Boston, MA 02112-0045.
3. All receipts must be submitted within **90 days** of your appointment date.
4. The receipts must be accompanied by a letter from your health-care provider saying the travel was related to your visits for covered services. The letter needs to be on Dana-Farber letterhead and include your name, address, Social Security number, date and time of appointments, and type of treatment at each appointment.

Call 617-632-3301 if you need help with this process. We encourage you to explore this program, as public transit costs can add up quickly.

Traveling from far away

If you live far from Boston, you might explore these free flight services:

- **Angel Flight Northeast** is a nonprofit that provides free air transportation to medical treatment for patients and their families whose limited resources could prevent them from receiving medical care. For more information, call 800-549-9980 or visit www.angelflightne.org.
- **Corporate Angel Network** is a charitable organization that arranges free flights to treatment centers for cancer patients by using the empty seats on corporate aircraft flying on routine business. The service is not based on financial need, and patients may travel as often as needed. For more information, call 866-328-1313 or visit www.corpangelnetwork.org.
- **Patient AirLift Services, or "PALS,"** offers free volunteer medical flights to people in need throughout the greater Northeast, from as far west as Ohio and as far south as Virginia. Call 1-888-818-1231 or visit www.palservices.org.

For more information

- Stop by or call Dana-Farber's Shapiro Center for Patients and Families, an information hub for resources at Dana-Farber and in the Boston area. Located on the first floor of the Yawkey Center building, the Shapiro Center is open weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Call the center at 617-632-3750.
- To access the internet during your visits to Dana-Farber, consider using one of the free computer workstations in the Blum Patient and Family Resource Center, or borrow an iPad from the Shapiro Center for Patients and Families.
- For health-related transportation services in Massachusetts, visit www.mass.gov and search for "Healthcare Transportation Resources."