



Veteran Torchbearers at the 2019 WaterFire Salute to Veterans event in Providence, Rhode Island.
Photograph by Erin Cuddigan.

RIPTA Proudly Celebrates Our Veterans

In honor of the dedicated members of the military, RIPTA is providing complimentary rides for active-duty service members and veterans with proof of eligibility to [WaterFire - A Salute to Veterans](#) (Saturday, November 1) and on Veterans Day (Tuesday, November 11). [Click here](#) for details.



RIPTA bus stop outside of Beans & Buns.

Drive Less RI Challenge is Underway!

The Drive Less RI Challenge [officially kicked off](#) last month and there's still plenty of time to join! This year-long initiative encourages Rhode Islanders to walk, bike, carpool, vanpool, or take public transit instead of driving alone. **With every green trip logged in the Drive Less RI app, participants earn automatic entries to win great prizes throughout the year.**

This month's weekly giveaways include gift cards to local favorites like Bristol Sunset Café, Sonia's Deli, Beans & Buns, and Café Ava! Download the free Drive Less RI app and start tracking your trips today! The app makes it simple to plan routes, match with carpools, and see the environmental and financial impact of each greener choice.

You don't have to give up driving entirely to make a difference - even swapping out one solo trip per week helps reduce traffic and lower emissions. Plus, [RIPTA's free Bus Buddy program](#) is available for anyone who wants help learning how to ride the bus with confidence.

The Drive Less RI Challenge continues through September 30, 2026. Start logging, start winning, and help keep Rhode Island moving sustainably! Visit DriveLessRI.com to learn more.



East Side Tunnel

Historic East Side Tunnel: One Year Later

A year ago, RIPTA [celebrated the reopening](#) of the historic East Side Tunnel following critical upgrades to improve safety, accessibility, and the overall transit experience. The tunnel continues to serve as a vital connection between Providence's East Side and downtown, blending modern updates with over a century of Rhode Island history.

Thanks to the \$25 million renovation project, riders are benefiting from enhanced lighting, improved drainage, and strengthened tunnel structure. The restored 110-year-old bus shelter on North Main Street remains a highlight—preserving its iconic architectural character while functioning as a modern transit amenity.

As we mark this milestone, we invite you to take a look back at the journey behind the project in *Another Hundred Years - The East Side Tunnel Project*. Our official documentary includes interviews

from RIPTA staff and a behind-the-scenes look at the tunnel's renovation. Watch the short film here: <https://youtu.be/apGfY2zrxU>

Love Us? Tell Us!

Our drivers are always going the extra mile to provide quality service for Rhode Islanders. Did a RIPTA driver do something that made you smile? We'd love to hear about it! Email CustomerService@ripta.com with any information you can provide about the date, time, and location of your bus, so we can thank the driver who brightened your day.



RIPTA trolley bus parked at the Newport Transportation Center.

Hop-On Hop-Off Newport Service Ends

After another successful summer season, RIPTA's free "Hop-On Hop-Off" bus service promotion in Newport came to an end yesterday, October 31, 2025. The service, funded by Discover Newport and the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island, offered transportation around Newport to tourist destinations and beaches on Route 67 (Bellevue/Salve Regina Univ.) and Route 68 (CCRI/Memorial Blvd./First Beach). Starting today, November 1, 2025, passengers must pay the full fare on those routes.

The RIPTA Customer Service Kiosk in the Newport Transportation Center, which opened for the duration of the promotion, will remain open daily through December 31, 2025. The public bathrooms at the Transportation Center, located at 23 America's Cup Avenue, Newport will remain open daily between 8am-12pm and 1pm-4pm through the end of the year with the support of Discover Newport, the City of Newport and RIPTA.



Safe Streets for All logo.

Watch Our Safe Streets for All Video – Available in English and Spanish!

RIPTA recently completed the Rhode Island Safe Streets for All (SS4A) planning effort, which supports statewide and local initiatives to make our roads safer for everyone. Through federal funding, RIPTA worked with 31 communities to develop Safety Action Plans that identify priority projects and strategies to reduce roadway injuries and save lives. To highlight this important work, we've created a short video that showcases how Rhode Island is working towards making its streets safer for all roadway users.

[Click here](#) to watch the video and learn more about Safe Streets for All.



Survey field interviewer and passenger sitting on a bus, holding and discussing printed survey.

RIPTA Releases 2024 Onboard Rider Survey Results

RIPTA conducted a comprehensive onboard rider survey to better understand the evolving travel needs and habits of passengers across Rhode Island. Transit passenger studies are required to be performed every five years; however, with travel patterns continuing to evolve in the wake of COVID, RIPTA updated its 2021 survey last year to gain important insight and help guide future transit service improvements.

Between October 2 and November 2, 2024, survey staff collected 5,486 responses on-board fixed-route and Flex vehicles using a 25-question survey available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

The survey revealed that 40.6% of trips help passengers commute to and from work, and that ridership among younger passengers is significant, with 25.2% of riders reporting their age as 24 or under. The number of riders choosing RIPTA over personal vehicles remains meaningful, as 9.3% of trips are made by passengers who have access to a car and a valid driver's license.

The shift toward convenient account-based fare payment also continues: At least 60.5% of all trips are now paid using Wave fare products, with an increase from 33.9% in 2021 to 61.1% in 2024 for all weekday trips taken using Wave.

These insights will inform planning decisions that support service improvements and a better rider experience statewide.

For more information, visit [RIPTA.com/ridersurvey](https://ripta.com/ridersurvey).



RIPTA Rider of the Week, Zachary.

RIPTA Rider of the Week: Zachary

For 38-year-old Johnston native Zachary Gauthier, RIPTA is more than just a way to get around—it's a lifeline. Whether he's heading to the State House for his advocacy work, visiting friends and family, or simply enjoying a trip to the mall or the movies, Zach says that RIPTA makes it all possible. "I couldn't do any of it without RIPTA," he shares. "It's the key to a whole new world."

Zach is an active member of the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee. He also serves as the Chair of the Policy Committee for the Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council, where he helps shape policy and track important legislation. He takes great pride in the group's collaborative spirit, the friendships formed, and the meaningful work they do to make Rhode Island more inclusive for everyone. "It's a great atmosphere, good food, and most of all, awesome people," he says.

When asked how he hopes to be remembered, Zach's answer reflects his compassion and commitment to others. "I want to be a person who cares about people, cares about the state, and worries about the next generation," he says. For Zach, RIPTA represents opportunity—the chance to connect, contribute, and live life to the fullest. "Thank you, RIPTA. I love you," he adds with a smile.

[Click here](#) to watch the full interview.

RIPTA's new Rider of the Week series aims to highlight real Rhode Islanders who use public transit not only to commute to work but also to travel to school, medical appointments, grocery stores, religious services, and recreational activities. With this series, we hope to share their authentic stories and inspire others along the way who may be reconsidering traveling by car. Want to be featured? Email marketing@RIPTA.com.



RIPTA employee, Nakeecha Roberts.

Employee Spotlight: Nakeecha Roberts, RIde Customer Service Agent

A proud Rhode Islander, Nakeecha has a personal connection to RIPTA and always knew she wanted to work here. As a child, she relied on the bus system to get to school while her mom took the bus to get to work and training programs. Later, during a stretch of car trouble, she found herself riding again, even taking the bus to her interview at RIPTA.

From her very first day, Nakeecha brought a sense of compassion, humor, and purpose to her role, helping passengers who rely on paratransit service.

Each day, Nakeecha schedules paratransit trips to doctor appointments, grocery stores, and other destinations for RIde program customers. But her work goes far beyond answering the phone; she listens, empathizes, and advocates. Whether she's helping someone apply for paratransit service,

explaining RIde procedures, or flagging an issue for follow-up, she meets every conversation with warmth and sincerity. “I’m not just here to read off a screen,” she says. “I really care, and I try to bring some personality to the phone.”

From the first call of the day to the last, Nakeecha approaches her work with a balance of humor and heart. “I’m not a robot,” she laughs. “People remember when you’re real with them and sometimes, a little laughter is exactly what they need.”

She’s also a strong advocate for RIde customers. If a scheduled paratransit trip doesn’t meet someone’s needs, she steps in to help resolve it by working with dispatch, offering guidance, and ensuring that riders understand their options. She’s a trusted voice for customers who might feel overwhelmed or confused, and often the first person they turn to with questions like “How do I sign up?” or “What happens next?”

Her dedication to passengers is matched by her bond with the RIde customer service team. “My coworkers are like family,” she says. “We help each other, we hold ourselves accountable, and we laugh a lot. That kind of environment makes a big difference.”

Nakeecha’s presence, both on the phone and in the office, makes her stand out at RIPTA as a true asset to the RIde program.



Woman holding a Wave card in front of a RIPTA bus.

Photo ID Road Trips for RIPTA's Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program

RIPTA's Photo Identification staff will travel to communities throughout the state to process Reduced Fare applications for qualified seniors and individuals with disabilities who are unable to get to our office in Kennedy Plaza. Staff also provides travel training.

Reduced Fare Photo ID Wave cards cost \$10 and are valid for two years. Replacement cards are \$20. [Click here](#) to view the schedule for upcoming RIPTA Photo ID Road Trips.

RIPTA staff will process Photo ID Wave card applications at the following locations:

- **NEWPORT** Thursday, November 6 • 10am-12pm | Edward King House, 35 King Street

- **PROVIDENCE** Thursday, November 13 • 10am - 12pm | Fox Point Manor, 575 Wickenden Street

For information on how to qualify for RIPTA's Reduced Fare Program for Seniors and People with Disabilities, call (401) 784-9500, ext. 2012 or visit [RIPTA.com/ReducedFare](https://www.ripta.com/ReducedFare).



Rider Alert Graphic.

SERVICE ALERTS

Holiday Service

RIPTA Observes Veterans Day RIPTA will operate all fixed-route buses and trolleys on a Sunday/Holiday schedule on Tuesday, November 11, 2025. All RIPTA offices, except for the Newport Customer Service Kiosk, will be closed on the holiday. [Click here](#) for details.

RIPTA Observes Thanksgiving Day RIPTA will operate all fixed-route services on a Sunday/Holiday schedule on Thursday, November 27, 2025. [Click here](#) for details.

Visit [RIPTA.com/alerts](https://www.ripta.com/alerts) for details on upcoming detours.

705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI 02907 [unsubscribe](#)