

# Changes to GoBus from the Ongoing Transit Review

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What do these recommendations mean for GoBus Users?**

- There will be no service interruptions with GoBus.
- To become registered with GoBus, new applicants will now have to participate in a transit assessment; all existing customers will also have to participate in a transit assessment to confirm eligibility – assessments will be mandatory to continue using GoBus.
- Trips can now be canceled with at least 45 minutes notice, instead of the previous 90 minute requirement.
- Our intention is to have new technology in taxis to pay for your GoBus trip – nothing will change with how you purchase or use your GoCard.

### **What will the assessment involve?**

- There will be no cost to you to participate in assessments.
- Accommodations and supports for the applicant will be made as required
- We will be hiring a professional organization/ company to conduct transit assessments.
- Assessments will be done by registered health care professionals such as occupational therapists, nurses, psychologists, etc.
- Existing customers and new applicants will meet with the assessors at a scheduled time and location.
- Assessments will vary from person to person and may include any of the following:
  - o review of the application form
  - o a personal interview
  - o consultation with the person's health care provider (if required)
  - o standardized assessment/ evaluation (if required)

### **How will GoBus define eligibility?**

- Individuals who face ability-related barriers and are not able to use Metrobus (at all or under certain conditions) may be eligible for GoBus.
- People with varying abilities may be eligible to use GoBus (physical, cognitive, mental health, hearing, vision, developmental, etc.)
- There are three types of eligibility – permanent, temporary and conditional
- Eligibility is not solely based on age, income, loss of driver's license, unfamiliarity with Metrobus/neighborhood not serviced by Metrobus.

### **I have been a GoBus user for many years. Why do I have to reapply to use this service?**

- The purpose of a paratransit service (GoBus) is to provide accessible public transportation for individuals who cannot use the conventional transit system (Metrobus).
- Recently there has been a dramatic increase in the demand for GoBus and to date we have not had a way to appropriately assess a person's transit needs.
- In order to ensure the sustainability of the service, we need to ensure that GoBus is not being used unnecessarily by people who are able to use other public transit options and that GoBus remains available to those who need it.

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### What is the City doing to reduce barriers on Metrobus?

- As part of the consultations for the ongoing Transit Review, GoBus and Metrobus users have provided feedback on some of the barriers to accessibility some users face with traditional busing.
  - Currently 6 routes are wheelchair accessible - Routes 1, 2, 3, 5, 14 and 23. All shelters along these routes are wheelchair accessible and the ramp can be deployed at over 80% of stops along these routes. Moving forward, our plans are to phase in more wheelchair accessible routes as buses in the fleet are replaced with wheelchair accessible buses. Our goal is to improve accessibility to achieve a fully inclusive service for all users.
  - All buses within the Metrobus fleet have the ability to kneel to the curb.
  - Options are available online, through the app, or through our customer service staff to help people plan their routes.
  - Metrobus is currently exploring options to provide better accessibility for Metrobus riders who require auditory cues.
- Our drivers are sensitive to the varying abilities and needs of our customers and are ready and willing to assist passengers who require additional supports.

### When will these changes take place?

- Metrobus is aiming to begin assessments in July/ August 2019 – more information will be provided as it becomes available.
- Assessments for existing customers should be done within 1 year.
- There will be no interruption to your service during this time.

### Are there supports in place to help me through this process?

- Transportation to the assessment will be provided – it will not cost you anything.
- You can bring a support person with you to the assessment.
- If you require specific supports, please contact Accessible Transit Services at Metrobus.
- For anyone who is deemed ineligible for GoBus, there will be an appeal process as well as an optional Travel Training program to help you learn to use Metrobus.
- We are working with our network of disability organizations to identify supports individuals may require and we will work with you to help make this process as safe and comfortable as possible.



**ST. JOHN'S**