

NEW WRTA FAREBOX SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Why did The WRTA change to the new farebox?

A. The old farebox was 16 years old and well beyond its useful life. The system had suffered numerous failures resulting in a significant loss of revenue. The WRTA was desirous of bringing the newest technology to its passengers allowing for the use of the Charlie Card and its many benefits.

Q. What methods of outreach did the WRTA use to inform the public of the new farebox?

A. The WRTA started preparing for the transition to the new farebox a year ago and started outreach efforts to the public in March 2012. Examples of the WRTA's outreach include, but are not limited to the following:

- Posted introductory information in Spanish and in English on our buses and on the WRTA website
- Issued numerous press releases resulting in articles and editorials in the Worcester Telegram and Gazette and the Worcester Business Journal
- Produced and distributed an eight (8) minute Charlie Card instructional video to Worcester Channel 13 and other local cable access channels.
- Traveled to numerous Senior Housing and Community Centers with a working farebox and gave a demonstration to those in attendance.
- Distributed over 10,000 instructional brochures in English and Spanish
- Provided a free shuttle between Worcester City Hall and the WRTA Customer Service Center where passengers could learn more about the new farebox

Q. What will the farebox accept for fares?

A. The farebox will accept \$1, \$5, \$10, & \$20 bills. It will also accept nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollar coins. The farebox will also accept Charlie Cards which will be sold at the WRTA headquarters, its Customer Service Center and at Ticket Vending Machines. The farebox will **not** accept pennies or wet or damaged bills.

Q. Where can I get a Charlie Card?

A. Passengers can get a Charlie Card at the WRTA headquarters at 287 Grove Street, the WRTA Customer Service Center at 317 Main Street, from the MBTA or any other participating regional transit authority.

Q. Is there a cost for the Charlie Card itself?

A. No, there will be no charge to the passenger for the actual plastic Charlie Card. However, any fares loaded onto the card will have to be purchased.

Q. How do I load value onto my Charlie Card?

- A. Passengers can go to WRTA headquarters at 287 Grove Street, to the WRTA Customer Service Center at 317 Main Street, the MBTA or any other participating regional transit authority terminals. Employees will assist you in using the Ticket Vending Machine where you can purchase a 31 day pass and/or add value to or purchase a 31 Day pass on a new or existing Charlie Card. The Ticket Vending Machine accepts cash, Visa, and MasterCard credit or debit cards.
- Q. Is there an expiration date on the Charlie Card?
- A. The Charlie Card will expire after 5 years of inactivity.
- Q. Can I buy a one day pass using the stored value on a Charlie Card?
- A. No. One day passes can only be purchased using cash on board the bus.
- Q. Can a passenger pay for family or friends using a Charlie Card?
- A. Yes. When using the stored value on a Charlie Card, passengers may pay for as many full rate fares as they wish. The WRTA does not recommend using the stored value on a Charlie Card to pay the fare of those eligible for a reduced fare rate.
- Q. Can I use the Charlie Card on the MBTA fixed route bus and subway system or on other regional transit authority fixed route bus systems in Massachusetts?
- A. Yes, stored value on a Charlie Card purchased from the WRTA may be used on the MBTA fixed route bus and subway system and on any of the other participating regional transit authority fixed route bus systems. Stored value on a Charlie Card purchased from the MBTA or participating regional transit authority can also be used on the WRTA fixed route bus system. Monthly passes can only be used on the system from which it was purchased. The WRTA and the other participating regional transit authorities will not accept a Charlie Ticket. In addition, the Charlie Card is not accepted on the MBTA Commuter Rail system.
- Q. Where can a passenger purchase a reduced fare Charlie Card?
- A. Reduced fare Charlie Cards can only be purchased at the WRTA Customer Service Center located at 317 Main Street in Worcester.
- Q. What other advantages are there to using the Charlie Card?
- A. The Charlie Card introduces interoperability between the MBTA fixed route bus and subway system for cash fares. The WRTA will not be responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cards however passengers can register their Charlie Card at “My Charlie Card” on the MBTA website at www.MBTA.com. The Charlie Card makes paying easier, eliminates cash and you can tap and go.
- Q. How do I pay my fare using cash?

A. Before inserting any money into the farebox, inform the bus operator of the type of fare you wish to purchase (full or reduced fare one ride trip or full or reduced fare one day pass). The farebox does not give change and therefore exact change should be used. However, the farebox will issue a magnetic “overpayment” ticket that can be used on a future ride only. **These tickets will not be redeemable for cash.** A minimum of \$1.50 is required for ticket issue. For example: If a passenger inserts \$4 for a full fare one day pass (value of \$3.50) an “overpayment” ticket will not be issued. If the same customer inserts a \$5 bill for that same one day pass, an “overpayment” ticket with a value of \$1.50 will be issued from the farebox.

Q. Can I purchase from the farebox two full fares one day passes with seven \$1 dollar bills?

A. No. If a passenger wishes to purchase two full fare one day passes, it must be done as separate fares with exact change.

Q. How do I activate my one day or 31 day pass?

A. One day passes purchased from the farebox are activated and date stamped when issued. If, when swiped at the farebox, the pass doesn't register re-insert the pass into the ticket slot. On initial use on a bus, 31 day passes purchased at a Ticket Vending Machine or at a WRTA authorized sales outlet must be inserted into the Ticket Slot on the farebox to be activated and date stamped. Once the pass is activated it must be swiped on the top of the farebox.

Q. I have an old Spring UPASS. Do I need to exchange it?

A. Yes. The old Spring UPASS will need to be exchanged with a new Spring UPASS that will work with the new farebox. These can be exchanged free of charge at your school's bookstore, WRTA headquarters at 287 Grove Street, or the WRTA Customer Service Center located at 317 Main Street Worcester.