

Ride Ready

with Travel Training

July - December 2024



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Ride Ready travel training program uses innovative technology and local partnerships to offer travel training to older residents and other transportation-dependent individuals in Florida's Capital City, increasing access and independent mobility.

The program provides a variety of travel training services to the public at no cost and was formally launched in 2024 thanks to the AARP Community Challenge grant.

The additional funding and support allowed staff to develop Ride Ready significantly, resulting in a stronger identity and a much greater impact. During the project period from July to December, almost 1,150 people benefitted from travel training services, compared to just 300 people in the first half of 2024 when there was no formal promotion.

TARGET DEMOGRAPHICS

- Older Adults / Senior Citizens
- Residents with Disabilities
- Adult Education Students
- Transportation Dependent Individuals
- K-12 Students

PROJECT BUDGET

	Amount	Cost
Brochures	5,000	\$940
Letters	1,750	\$1,020
Postage	1,750	\$1,200
Interior Bus Ads	56	\$425
Laminated Signs	25	\$150
Jackets	25	\$1,050
Pens	500	\$430
Lanyards with Badge Holders	550	\$640
Poster Board	1	\$60
Travel Trainer Badges	5	\$65
Stickers	500	\$100
Keychains	250	\$510
Rubber Bracelets	450	\$100
Portable Hand Sanitizers	250	\$330
7-Day Bus Passes	100	\$1,000
VIP Passes for Program Ambassadors	37	\$1,850
Bus Stop Signs	40	\$200
	Total	\$9,970

PROJECT CHALLENGES

SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

With this program launch occurring during hurricane season in North Florida and Tallahassee still reeling from a violent storm with three tornadoes in May of 2024, it was not surprising that the program and scheduled events sometimes had to be cancelled or rescheduled due to inclement weather.

Between July and December of 2024, there were three instances of extreme weather forecasts:

1. **Hurricane Debby** – August 4 & 5 – Offices closed and emergency operations activated.
2. **Hurricane Helene** – September 25 & 26 – Offices closed and emergency operations activated, one event rescheduled to November.
3. **Hurricane Milton** – October 9 & 10 – No closures.

Due to their severity, announcements and updates related to these weather events took precedence over program marketing and grant announcements on social media platforms.

PRINT MARKETING



StarMetro developed a brand identity for Ride Ready and ordered a variety of promotional materials for the program, including stickers, bracelets, keychains, pens, hand sanitizers, lanyards, and jackets.

Staff sent program brochures and invitations to 1,750 older adults and individuals with disabilities who qualified for transportation assistance services.

The brochure, invitation letter, posterboard, signs, and other printed materials are attached at the end of this report.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEB MARKETING

StarMetro published the Ride Ready webpage in September 2024 and featured the travel training program as a primary link on StarMetro’s newly redesigned homepage.

The webpage includes a booking tool that allows interested clients to easily request a travel training interview or group training that fits their schedule.

StarMetro uses social media as a communication tool on three platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter).

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



On November 22, StarMetro posted [a spotlight about Kate Frizzell](#) as a part of an ongoing series celebrating StarMetro’s 50th year in service. The spotlight included information about the Ride Ready travel training program.

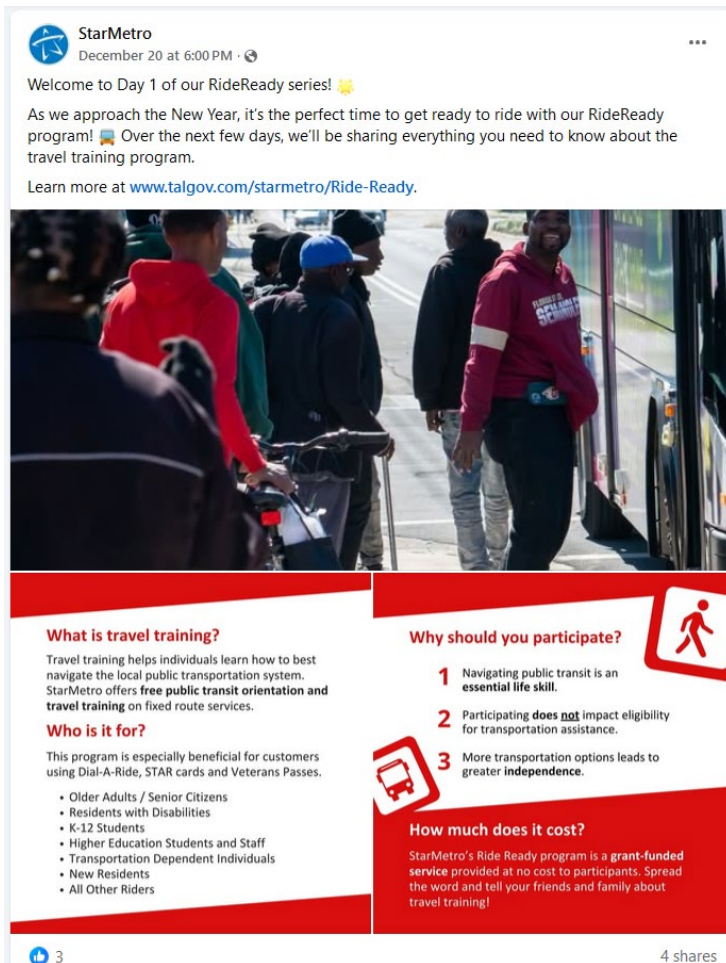
“Meet Kate Frizzell, StarMetro’s Community Involvement Coordinator and a key player in our ongoing efforts to foster connections within the Tallahassee community. 🌞

Kate’s role is multifaceted, encompassing public engagement, program development, and ensuring our services remain accessible and responsive to the needs of our riders. One of Kate’s most impactful contributions has been establishing Ride Ready, a travel training program designed to help people confidently navigate our fixed-route system. From obtaining certifications to

developing branding and gathering community feedback, Kate was instrumental in building the program from the ground up.

Kate’s ability to bridge the gap between public perception and operational realities is central to her role. She works tirelessly to build trust with the community and shine a light on the critical work happening behind the scenes at StarMetro. Whether she’s addressing operator feedback, communicating with riders, or helping someone rediscover the value of public transit, her goal is always to make people feel heard.”

END-OF-YEAR PROGRAM PROMOTION



The screenshot shows a Facebook post from StarMetro dated December 20 at 6:00 PM. The post text reads: "Welcome to Day 1 of our RideReady series! 🌟 As we approach the New Year, it's the perfect time to get ready to ride with our RideReady program! 🗺️ Over the next few days, we'll be sharing everything you need to know about the travel training program. Learn more at www.talgov.com/starmetro/Ride-Ready." Below the text is a photo of a group of people, including a man in a red hoodie, standing near a bus. The post includes a graphic with the following text:

What is travel training?
Travel training helps individuals learn how to best navigate the local public transportation system. StarMetro offers **free public transit orientation and travel training** on fixed route services.

Who is it for?
This program is especially beneficial for customers using Dial-A-Ride, STAR cards and Veterans Passes.

- Older Adults / Senior Citizens
- Residents with Disabilities
- K-12 Students
- Higher Education Students and Staff
- Transportation Dependent Individuals
- New Residents
- All Other Riders

Why should you participate?

- 1 Navigating public transit is an **essential life skill**.
- 2 Participating **does not** impact eligibility for transportation assistance.
- 3 More transportation options leads to greater **independence**.

How much does it cost?
StarMetro's Ride Ready program is a **grant-funded service** provided at no cost to participants. Spread the word and tell your friends and family about travel training!

3 likes, 4 shares

StarMetro shared Ride Ready travel training information in a daily series from Dec 20 to Dec 23 to wrap up program launch and mark the completion of the AARP Community Challenge Project.

TRAVEL TRAINING SERVICES

LEVEL 1: ORIENTATION



Public transit orientation includes presentations about StarMetro services, trip planning assistance, bus visits, introduction to bus features and rider expectations, and practicing how to purchase and use bus fares.

Presentations are individually tailored for each group and consider the audience's learning levels and existing skills. This level of training is very effective for community groups, educational class, or families new to town. Bus visits create a more hands-on learning experience, but are limited to large groups or events with 50 or more attendees.

During the program launch, this level of training was provided to **1,058 people**.

“Kate did a great job – no notes!”

“We may want to schedule a similar activity with Kate / StarMetro.”

LEVEL 2: FAMILIARIZATION



Public transit familiarization provides a hands-on experience riding the bus, including tours of transit facilities and use of route maps or trip-planning apps.

A field trip or trainer ride-along is a fun icebreaker for customers who are unfamiliar with StarMetro vehicles and facilities. During these interactive sessions, the travel trainer accompanies a small group on the bus while demonstrating how to use transit and answering common questions. This level of training was provided to **70 people**.

“Our presentation was very informative. Covered all the different aspects of riding the bus. We had the opportunity to ride the bus along with changes buses and see the various routes. Our leader was great with answering our questions and our individual situations.”

LEVEL 3: INDIVIDUAL TRAINING



Individual training generally includes a travel plan, one-on-one instruction, and scheduled skill-building sessions to get individuals “Ride Ready.”

For these specialized sessions, a certified travel training instructor assesses an individual’s existing skills and develops a training plan. Customers facing specific challenges receive one-on-one travel training tailored to their individual needs and goals.

During program launch, StarMetro sent invitations to 1,750 paratransit customers to inform them about the availability and benefits of travel training.

“We had so much fun, Kate! You are a great educator.

If any of our teens would like to do another training, could we help facilitate that with you? Given their unique abilities, I think their parents and caregivers will want to make sure they are well versed in the bus system before sending them out on their own.”

TRY TRANSIT TUESDAY EVENT



A - The Try Transit Tuesday event was staffed by StarMetro and community partners. Pictured, from left to right: Stefanie Hartsfield, Brandon Turner, Kate Frizzell, Tom Thompson, and Allie Fleming.

Mobility Week provided the best opportunity to spread the word about Ride Ready. Staff submitted the event's details to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for inclusion on the list of 2024 Mobility Week events.

StarMetro hosted the travel training event on Try Transit Tuesday (October 29), setting up tables and providing AARP Community Challenge t-shirts to two community partners: **Safe Mobility for Life** and the **Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC)**.

In addition to tabling at the plaza, the travel trainer arranged a field trip at **Tallahassee Senior Services** for interested older adults to visit the C.K. Steele Bus Plaza.

Many regular riders visited the table to hear about Ride Ready travel training and explore other mobility and transportation resources.



This event featured the new Ride Ready promotional materials that were made possible by funding from the AARP Community Challenge Grant.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND FIELD TRIPS

RETHINK ENERGY FLORIDA

July 25, 2024

Rethink Energy Florida engages and educates people to help them rethink how they use energy. Since Tallahassee has committed to having an all-electric bus fleet by 2035, it made sense for them to “Think Transit” and take their summer camp class on a field trip using public transportation!

The travel trainer accompanied a group of 22 students and 5 chaperones on a fixed route bus and took them on a tour of C.K. Steele Bus Plaza.

LIGHTHOUSE OF THE BIG BEND

August 15, 2024

Lighthouse of the Big Bend (LBB) serves older adults and other individuals dealing with vision loss or impairment. They requested a presentation of StarMetro’s services and policies during their Hurricane Preparedness series, which was attended by about 10 people.

Sept 20, 2024

While attending **Techno Demo Day** as a guest speaker, the travel trainer reviewed available services and provided information about travel training and the public transit system to about 25 people in addition to tabling with Ride Ready promotional materials.

WAKULLA HIGH SCHOOL

November 4, 2024

Wakulla High School attended Techno Demo Day with their special needs students and asked if StarMetro could arrange a field trip for them to learn more about public transit. The travel trainer accompanied a group of 35 students and 7 chaperones on a fixed route bus and took them on a tour of C.K. Steele Bus Plaza.

HANG TOUGH FOUNDATION

Oct 21, 2024

[Hang Tough Foundation](#) is an organization that serves families whose children have life altering medical and special needs. The program manager reached out to StarMetro to set up a field trip on the fixed route bus to demonstrate how their teens could travel independently in Tallahassee. The travel trainer accompanied a group of 13 students and 3 chaperones on a fixed route bus and took them on a tour of C.K. Steele Bus Plaza.

Video clips from this field trip were posted by the organization on TikTok, [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

TALLAHASSEE SENIOR CENTER

October 22, 2024

The [Tallahassee Senior Center](#) is an essential partner when serving older adults in Leon County. StarMetro and the Senior Center scheduled a series of travel training events at the Senior Center. Safe Mobility for Life accompanied StarMetro to the first transit orientation, and together they provided relevant information about the public transit system and opened up the floor for questions and answers.

October 29, 2024

As a part of StarMetro's Try Transit Tuesday event, StarMetro and Safe Mobility for Life accompanied a group of 10 older adults on a fixed route bus and took them on a tour of C.K. Steele Bus Plaza.

November 18, 2024

StarMetro completed a short classroom transit orientation for those that had missed the first two events. The travel trainer accompanied a group of 4 older adults on a fixed route bus and took them on a tour of C.K. Steele Bus Plaza.

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

November 13, 2024



International Rescue Committee (IRC) is an organization that assists refugees from all over the world. StarMetro regularly provides travel training orientations for new residents and refugees who depend on

public transit and experience language barriers. In this case, StarMetro visited the local IRC office to provide a transit orientation presentation for 5 people with the assistance of a translator.

December 11, 2024



StarMetro met the IRC at the C.K. Steele Bus Plaza to provide a transit orientation presentation and a tour of the plaza for 8 people with the assistance of a remote translator.

OUTREACH AND CROSS PROMOTION

K-12 AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

August - September 2024

StarMetro engages in school and college outreach every year, and 2024 was no exception with almost a dozen tabling opportunities and external events.

1. Adult & Community Education Open House, August 8
2. Jumpstart to Success Back to School Community Event, August 10
3. Table at C.K. Steele Plaza for STAR Program & Ride Ready, August 13-14
4. Tallahassee State College Convocation and Resource Fair, August 16
5. Jake Gaither Community Center Resource Fair, August 17
6. Table at Florida State College Transportation Office, August 23-26
7. Florida State College Graduate Student Resource Fair, Sept 12
8. Ghazvini Learning Center Open House, Sept 12
9. Godby High School Open House, Sept 16
10. District Advisory Council Meeting for Leon County Schools, Sept 19

SERVICE UPDATES

August 2024

In August, StarMetro introduced important system-wide service updates, and Ride Ready played an essential role in the communication of these updates to the public.

The travel trainer tabled at C.K. Steele Bus Plaza on August 26 to answer questions, introduce customers to new trip-planning tools, and provide support to customers impacted by the updates.

StarMetro included the Ride Ready email on service update signage as a resource for customers who would benefit from additional trip-planning assistance.

October 24 & 25, 2024



[North Florida Worlds of Work](#) provides 10th grade students with hands-on experiences with a huge variety of careers and employment opportunities, but this event welcomes older high school and college students as well. As a public transit provider, StarMetro opens doors to this audience as both a career and transportation option.

StarMetro parked a bus at Tallahassee State College for the duration of this two-day event so that students could picture themselves as an operator by sitting in the driver's seat, stretch their planning muscles by drawing a new route through Tallahassee, or think like a mechanic by studying engine schematics and looking under the hatch.

November 12, 2024

Every year, StarMetro staff presents at the **Neighborhood Leadership Academy**, a City of Tallahassee program that hosts and educates local leaders and neighborhood representatives to foster advocacy and understanding between the local government and its citizens.

StarMetro's 2024 presentation included information about the new travel training program, leading to multiple questions about Ride Ready and the services available. The travel trainer provided contact information to interested individuals.

November 16, 2024

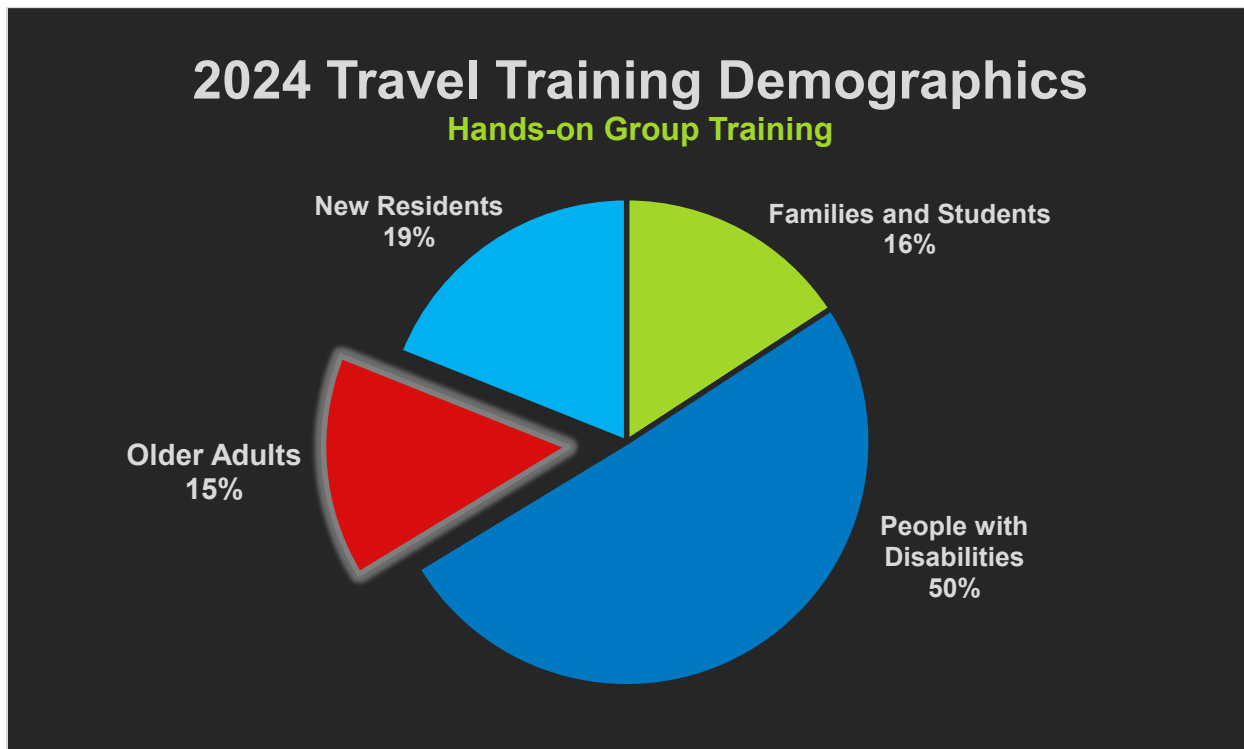


StarMetro attended **Touch-A-Truck** at Jack McClean Community Center, an event organized by the Parks & Recreation department that drew an incredible 700 attendees! This event is especially popular with parents and grandparents of young children, and many attendees have never been inside of a city bus before.

IMPACT ON OLDER ADULTS

PARTICIPATION

The chart depicts the percentage of older adult participation in hands-on group training during the project period.



HUMANITARIAN AWARD

At the end of StarMetro’s Transit Advisory Board meeting on October 1, 2024, members of Tallahassee Council of the Blind (TCB) presented the William Ferrell “Just Bill” Humanitarian Award to Kate Frizzell.

In their nomination for Florida Council of the Blind, TCB cited their personal experiences with Kate and various StarMetro programs, including travel training. The nomination (in part) reads as follows:

“As her title implies, Kate interacts with all transportation customers, teaching and encouraging riders to learn how to effectively and confidently use the fixed-route bus system, engaging with the public to provide and receive information and feedback and overall communicate about StarMetro upcoming and existing services.

Kate doesn't just offer instruction by talking. On one hot summer afternoon, she met one of our members and rode with her on an unfamiliar route, providing instruction on an intersection crossing and walking with her to her dental office.

Like Bill, Kate is a self-effacing worker and organizer. She is responsive, knowledgeable, and willing to ask hard questions and give hard answers when necessary. She is assistance in action, not enabling but always challenging for better. She perfectly embodies this prestigious award and will be totally shocked if chosen.

She communicates, educates, facilitates and updates to ensure equality, independence and dignity for all!”



Social Media Post

PROJECT RESULTS

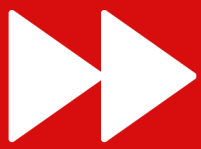


The Ride Ready program is ongoing and StarMetro continues to provide travel training services to the community!

Before the AARP Community Challenge, StarMetro's travel training services worked behind the scenes and had limited community presence. The additional funding and support allowed staff to develop Ride Ready significantly, resulting in a stronger identity and a much greater impact that will resonate into 2025 and beyond.

StarMetro will visit the Senior Center and other community partners on a regular basis to provide travel training orientations and field trips to target demographics, and has encouraged community partners to refer individuals for one-on-one travel training as needed.

Multiple travel training assessments and more than 10 group trainings are already scheduled for the first quarter of the new year, and StarMetro is looking forward to more travel training success stories!



Ride Ready

with Travel Training

Support provided by



PUBLIC TRANSIT IS FOR EVERYONE

StarMetro offers free public transit orientation and travel training on fixed route services.



What is available?

- Group presentations and field trips
- One-on-one travel training

Who is it for?

- Older Adults / Senior Citizens
- Residents with Disabilities
- Transportation Dependent Individuals
- Students of All Ages
- New Residents

 Talgov.com/RideReady

Call Customer Service or
scan **here** to get started



▶▶ Ride Ready with Travel Training



BECOME A PUBLIC TRANSIT PRO

Group Presentations | Field Trips | One-on-One Travel Training

StarMetro's **Ride Ready** program offers free public transit orientation and travel training on fixed route services in Tallahassee.

What is travel training?

Travel training helps individuals learn how to best navigate the local public transportation system. **Ride Ready** offers a variety of one-on-one or group travel training sessions.

This program is especially beneficial to older adults, residents with disabilities, students, and other transportation dependent individuals. **Spread the word** and tell your friends and family about travel training!

Why should you get Ride Ready?

- 1 Navigating public transit is an **essential life skill**.
- 2 Participating **does not** impact eligibility for transportation assistance.
- 3 More transportation options leads to greater **independence**.

How do you participate?

Travel training is a grant-funded service provided by StarMetro at **no cost** to participants. Customers facing specific challenges may request travel training tailored to their individual needs and goals.

Please review the enclosed brochure or visit [Talgov.com/RideReady](https://www.talgov.com/RideReady) for more information. **Online booking** is available now for one-on-one training interviews and group presentations.

Customers can also call **850-891-5200** to ask about travel training or request program information in different languages or formats.





Ride Ready

at the Senior Center

Support provided by



October

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!



Transit Orientation

Tues, Oct 22 at 10:30 a.m. | Dining Room

Learn how the city bus works and strategies for planning trips on fixed route services.

Try Transit Tuesday

Tues, Oct 29 at 10 a.m. | Dining Room

Take a field trip with the travel trainer to the bus plaza for Mobility Week giveaways. Great for new riders!

November

Transit Orientation

Mon, Nov 18 at 2 p.m. | Dining Room

Learn how the city bus works and strategies for planning trips on fixed route services. Includes a free field trip on the city bus.

RSVP TODAY!



SCAN ME

Read more about the program

Talgov.com/RideReady

Reserve your space for travel training

TallahasseeSeniorFoundation.org





Ride Ready

at the Leon County Public Library

Support provided by



MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!

Join StarMetro and the Leon County Public Library to learn how to ride the bus in Tallahassee!

This interactive training will demonstrate how to plan a trip, read maps and schedules, recognize bus stops, pay fares, practice rider safety, and more.

Leon County Main Library

200 West Park Ave | Program Room A

Sun, Jan 12 | 2 to 3 p.m.

Dr. B.L. Perry, Jr. Branch Library

2817 South Adams St | Program Room

Tues, Feb 4 | 4 to 5 p.m.

Lake Jackson Branch Library

3840 North Monroe St | Meeting Room

Thurs, Feb 27 | 6 to 7 p.m.

Bruce J. Host

Northeast Branch Library

5513 Thomasville Rd | Meeting Room

Fri, Mar 14 | 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.



Read more about the program

Talgov.com/RideReady



LEROY COLLINS
LEON COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY



What is travel training?

StarMetro offers free public transit orientation and travel training on fixed route services. Travel training helps individuals learn how to best navigate the local public transportation system.

Who is it for?

This program is especially beneficial for customers using Dial-A-Ride, STAR cards and Veterans Passes.

- Older Adults / Senior Citizens
- Residents with Disabilities
- K-12 Students
- Higher Education Students and Staff
- Transportation Dependent Individuals
- New Residents
- All Other Riders



Why should you participate?

- 1 Navigating public transit is an **essential life skill**.
- 2 Participating **does not** impact eligibility for transportation assistance.
- 3 More transportation options leads to greater **independence**.

Things to keep in mind

Travel training may involve interacting with traffic, being subject to weather conditions, and riding the bus with people who are strangers. Riders must accept these risks to participate.

StarMetro expects riders to follow the code of conduct and treat other passengers and StarMetro employees with respect. Any dangerous or harassing behavior may result in the suspension or cancellation of travel training.

Visit [Talgov.com/StarMetro](https://www.talgov.com/StarMetro) for more information on StarMetro services, Code of Conduct, and rider expectations.

Accessibility Information

Customers with a variety of accessibility needs are welcome to participate. Program information is available in different languages or formats upon request.

All StarMetro vehicles meet ADA standards for accessibility.

Please visit [Talgov.com/ADA](https://www.talgov.com/ADA) for more information.



StarMetro Office
850-891-5199
[Talgov.com/StarMetro](https://www.talgov.com/StarMetro)

Revised: September 24, 2024

Ride Ready with Travel Training



Group Presentation

Level 1: Transit Orientation

- Review available services
- Learn trip planning options
- Discuss bus features and safety tips
- Practice how to purchase and use bus fares



Group presentations are very flexible and can take place at a school, community room, transit center, or even through a virtual session.

Presentations are individually tailored for each group and consider the audience's learning levels and existing skills. This is a perfect fit for a community group, educational class, or families new to town.

Large groups or events with 50 or more attendees may request a bus visit for a more hands-on learning experience.

Field Trip

Level 2: Hands-on Familiarization

- Learn to read and understand route maps
- Discover how to use partnering transit apps
- Discuss wayfinding and stop identification
- Practice boarding and riding the bus



A field trip or trainer ride-along is a fun icebreaker for customers who are unfamiliar with StarMetro vehicles and facilities.

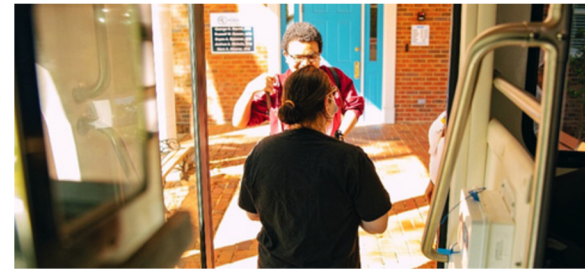
During these interactive sessions, the travel trainer accompanies a group on the bus while demonstrating how to use transit and answering common questions.

This style of training is most suitable for small groups between 2 to 15 people.

Building Skills

Level 3: Individual Training

- Navigate pedestrian areas and crosswalks
- Learn transit etiquette and social skills
- Practice riding the bus with a mobility device
- Introduce a service animal to a fixed route or paratransit vehicle



Customers facing specific challenges may request travel training tailored to their individual needs and goals.

For these specialized sessions, a certified travel trainer will assess your existing skills and develop a plan to help you build on them.

Individual training generally includes travel plans, one-on-one instruction, and scheduled skill-building sessions to get you **Ride Ready**.



How much does it cost?

StarMetro's Ride Ready program is a **grant-funded service** provided at no cost to participants.

Initial presentations and trainings are included. Additional rides may incur a cost depending on the population served but may include discounted or fare-free options.

Support provided by

AARP[®]

Open for more training types



To request a group presentation or individual interview, visit Talgov.com/RideReady by scanning the QR Code.

