



Franklin Regional Transit Authority

Welcome Packet

Revised March 2017

Certification Process

In accordance with U. S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) implementing regulations, the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) has developed a certification process designed to limit ADA complementary paratransit eligibility to persons identified under Section 37.123 of the regulations. The application for ADA complementary paratransit contains questions about cognitive and functional impairments and/or disabilities which will be utilized to determine a consumer's eligibility.

This determination may apply to all trip requests or it may be conditional based on the type of trip requested. The criteria for eligibility are described in the FRTA's ADA complementary paratransit application.

FRTA utilizes a self-certification process along with a medical verification process by the applicant's physician or health care professional who will attest to the validity the application and the ability to navigate the fixed-route system. The medical professional reviews the portion completed by the applicant for accuracy and then completes the functional and cognitive assessments.

FRTA shall use its discretion to verify the information with the individuals listed in the application form. The applicant may be called for a personal interview by phone to verify eligibility. FRTA will review all requests for eligibility and a determination of eligibility will be made within 21 days of receipt of a completed application. Incomplete paper applications will be promptly returned with the missing information noted.

The eligibility determination letter will explain any eligibility limitations or conditions. If the applicant is determined to be ineligible, the determination letter will state the reasons for the finding. All eligibility determination letters will contain information about appeals, allowing the applicant to exercise their appeal rights and informing them of any conditions relevant to appeals. If applicable, the letter will also contain information about use of the paratransit service and policies related to its use. Information will be provided, as appropriate, in an accessible format. In the event that the 21-day time period for eligibility determination is exceeded, the applicant will be presumed eligible until a formal notification is made.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for ADA service, a person must be unable to ride our accessible fixed-route system and must meet one or more of the following: criteria:

Unconditional:

This is granted to a person if their disability (functional or cognitive) prevents him/her from using the fixed route bus service for *any* trip. May schedule trips as early as 14 days in advance or as late as the day prior to using the service.

Conditional:

This is granted to a person that can use buses under certain circumstances, but needs to utilize our services under certain conditions, such as weather conditions or barriers to a particular trip by bus. May only schedule trips the day prior to using the service.

Temporary:

This is granted to a person on a temporary basis. The length of time will vary depending on the medical necessity.

When considering eligibility for specific trips, the three service categories of ADA eligibility summarized above will be used.

Complementary Paratransit Service Eligibility for Visitors

Visitors from out-of-town who are certified ADA-eligible by another transit provider or provide documentation of a disability may use the ADA paratransit service for up to 21 days in a year without going through the full application process. FRTA may request proof of residency. Please call (413) 774-2262 to register. If you are already certified, FRTA will request a photocopy of your ADA paratransit ID. If you are not already certified, FRTA may request proof of your disability by asking you to have a health care professional complete the Medical Verification Form or to provide a letter from a health care professional. Visitor eligibility will be granted by the next business day. A visitor who needs ADA paratransit service for more than 21 days in a year must apply for eligibility.

Minimum Age for ADA Paratransit

The FRTA has a minimum age requirement of 10 years old.

Upon Approval

Upon approval, the consumer will be given information on how to use the ADA service. The consumer must call and make an appointment within 30 days of his/her approval and to come to the office so that a photo ID can be issued, acting as documentation of his/her eligibility. The rides to and from the office for the photo ID will be provided at no charge.

ADA Appeals Process

If you are granted less than unconditional eligibility for or are suspended from ADA complementary paratransit services and you feel that this determination has been made in error, you have the right to appeal this determination.

All appeals to denials of eligibility must be submitted to the FRTA within 60 days from date of denial of an individual's application. All appeals shall be addressed to:

FRTA Administrator
12 Olive Street
Greenfield, MA 01301

In order to file this appeal, you must notify FRTA either in writing or in person, within 60 days of the date on the letter advising you that you are ineligible for services. Your written appeal may state your reasons why you feel that the determination of ineligibility issued is unjust and state how your disability prevents you from utilizing or accessing our buses.

The denied individual shall be given the opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments before an appeals committee. After your appeal is received, a hearing will be scheduled to evaluate your case. This hearing process will allow you to present information and arguments on your behalf. You may have others who are knowledgeable of your physical and/or mental limitations speak on your behalf.

Applicants who need accommodations should request this in advance (i.e., FRTA will pay for a sign interpreter for a deaf person or a reader for a blind person).

After the hearing, you will be advised in writing and in accessible formats as appropriate, and within reason, of the decision of the appeal board. For other than unconditional eligibility determinations, the advisory board will present its decision to the FRTA Administrator for confirmation. If an advisory board's negative decision is confirmed by the Administrator, the ruling will be final.

The FRTA is not required to provide you with ADA complementary paratransit service while your appeal is under consideration. However, for a suspension, service will be provided from the day after which FRTA receives a letter appealing the suspension until the advisory board has rendered its decision. If the appeal board has not made its decision within 30 days of the date on your written request for appeal, you are entitled to ADA complementary paratransit service from that time until a final decision is made.

If you receive notice of a warning or temporary suspension, based on violation of program rules, you have the right to appeal that determination as well and use the same process as described above.

Children on ADA Complementary Paratransit

Passengers wanting to bring children five (5) and under on board during their trip are required to also bring a child safety seat when applicable. Children who weigh forty (40) pounds or less, regardless of their age, must travel in a federally approved car seat. Children under the age of five (5) who weigh more than forty (40) pounds must travel in a federally approved booster seat. Children capable of sitting on their own must sit in a seat and not on the adult's lap. Please provide us with any medical certification you have indicating the inability of your child to use a child restraint device.

In accordance with *MGL Chapter 90; Section 7AA*.

“No child under age five and no child weighing forty pounds or less shall ride as a passenger in a motor vehicle on any way unless such child is properly fastened and secured, according to the manufacturer's instructions, by a child passenger restraint as defined in section one.”

Child safety seats must comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) and must have manufacturers' instructions posted on the seat. Passengers must indicate any additional passengers when scheduling the trip. Parents or guardians must provide their own child safety seat and take it with them when they exit the vehicle. FRTA will not carry a child without a safety seat. Drivers will help you carry or install your child safety seat if you are physically unable to perform the task. Drivers are not permitted to lift or carry children.

Service Animals

Service animals and service animals in-training are allowed on all FRTA vehicles without being caged. FRTA will transport other authorized service animals provided they are properly restrained and do not pose a threat or are disruptive to other clients or the driver. Failure to control a service animal may result in the animal being requested to exit the vehicle. At the time of certification (or, if applicable, later), clients are required to notify FRTA if he/she must travel with a service animal.

For safety reasons, drivers are not allowed to carry cages or handle service animals.

Caregiver Responsibility

Some clients are mentally or cognitively impaired or have severe memory problems such that they cannot be safely left on their own at either the pick-up point or the drop-off point. It is the responsibility of the client's caregivers or family to clearly identify these clients to FRTA so that we can inform the driver and take appropriate precautions. However, the driver cannot act as an attendant for these clients. Cognitively impaired clients will be allowed to travel without an attendant only as long as they exhibit safe behavior in the vehicle. An attendant or caregiver must be present at the pick-up point and at the drop-off point for clients who cannot be left alone. If a responsible attendant or caregiver is not present when the driver attempts to pick-up or drop-off these clients, it can seriously disrupt the driver's schedule. When FRTA encounters absences of an attendant or caregiver, service to the client may be suspended and the matter may be reported to an appropriate state, county, or local agency. In the absence of a responsible party to take custody of the client, the transportation provider will return the client to the booking office and a phone call will be placed to the police.

Caregivers and Social Service Agencies

This document was written for all clients and is phrased as if the client is reading the document. We know / understand that many caregivers will assume the responsibility of reading and understanding this information as well as making reservations and other arrangements for the client. However, if the person you take care of will be transported without an attendant, it is very important that he or she be able to understand and follow basic client responsibilities.

Personal Care Attendants and Companions

A person traveling with an ADA eligible person as a personal care attendant (PCA) may ride with the individual without paying a fare. The PCA must have the same origin and destination as the consumer. The PCA may be a paid employee or a friend or family member of the eligible person. A PCA is clearly meant to be someone whose services are required by the consumer. It is important to realize that the need for a PCA is not necessarily related to travel with ADA Paratransit services. A PCA is often needed by individuals with sensory, degenerative, physical and/or developmental disabilities to assist with other activities of daily living, regarding physical challenges they must meet. Individuals may need a PCA for these activities but be fully capable of traveling on the transit vehicle with the assistance already provided by transit personnel. The need for PCA services can be intermittent or occasional and still be authorized. FRTA provides assistance necessary to board, disembark, or stow personal belongings and may include assistance to and from the door as needed (case by case basis). One PCA is authorized without fare; additional travelers are considered companions.

A companion is a friend, relative, or other person who is traveling with you, but is not coming along primarily to help you. Consumers traveling with or without a PCA are entitled to have at least one companion accompany them. Additional companions are transported on a space-available basis. Companions must have the same origin and destination as the consumer. Companions pay the same fare as the client to travel.

If you plan to have a PCA or companion accompany you, *you must inform us when scheduling your trip to guarantee space on the vehicle.* FRTA cannot provide or assume the duties of a PCA and space must be reserved for a PCA when the trip is scheduled. Under certain circumstance FRTA may strongly recommend a PCA for clients with lost sensory or motor functions to such an extent that they need assistance with personal care needs, behavior, and/or general safety. At the time of certification (or, if applicable, later), clients are required to notify FRTA if he/she must travel with a PCA and will be reminded to bring one along at the time the reservation is made.

Transporting Bags / Packages

Each consumer is limited to the number of items/bags that they can carry onto the vehicles without disrupting normal entrance onto the vehicle or with payment of fare. Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated. Drivers are not allowed to enter any buildings beyond the main door. We encourage clients to use a safe and efficient means of transporting bags / packages, such as a portable folding two-wheeled shopping cart.

Fare and Service Schedule

All prices are for one-way trips

Sunderland Route (Route #23)	\$2.50 each way
Charlemont Route (Route #41)	\$2.50 each way
Greenfield Route (Route #21)	\$2.50 each way
Orange Route (Route #32)	\$2.50 each way
Montague Route (Route #22)	\$2.50 each way
Northampton Route (Route #31)	\$2.50 each way

THERE IS NO ADA SERVICE ON SATURDAY, SUNDAY, NEW YEARS DAY, MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY, PRESIDENTS DAY, PATRIOTS DAY, MEMORIAL DAY, INDEPENDENCE DAY, LABOR DAY, COLUMBUS DAY, VETERANS DAY, THANKSGIVING DAY, AND CHRISTMAS DAY.

The USDOT ADA regulations require FRTA to provide comparable paratransit transportation to persons who are unable to access or navigate the fixed-route system on the basis of their disability, and are traveling within established fixed-route corridors.

In order to access ADA complementary paratransit transportation, eligible person's origins and destinations must be within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile corridor on either side of an existing FRTA bus route during the times that the fixed-route system is in operation. Hours will vary depending on the fixed route schedule. See bus schedules for availability.

The service area is available within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of our fixed routes. Origins and destinations not within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a route are ineligible for ADA complementary paratransit service.

We are committed to providing trips that are not excessive in length (time) and have adopted the standard that no ADA trip will take more time than it takes to make the trip by bus, including the time it takes to walk to the bus stop, wait for the bus, transfer to another bus, and walk from the bus stop to the destination.

Scheduling

Your ADA trip *must* be called in a minimum of one day prior to the day the ride is needed, during our normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Trips may be scheduled over the weekend for Monday transportation or on holidays when the office is closed by calling and leaving a message/voice mail at extension 103 prior to 4:00 p.m. on the day before the trip. Trips will not be scheduled for phone calls received after that time. Customers with unconditional eligibility may schedule trips from one (1) to fourteen (14) days in advance. Customers with conditional eligibility may schedule trips one (1) day in advance. Customers with temporary disability may schedule trips one (1) in advance. All trips must be within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a bus route and travel times must fall within the hours of the bus route.

To schedule your ride, please call FRTA at (413) 774-2262, ext. 0.

For TTY service call (413) 774-2262.

Please have the following information available when scheduling your trip:

- Date of your trip
- Exact address (including entrance/exit to be picked up or dropped off at)
- Appointment time and return time
- Use of any special mobility aids
- Door to door service vs. curb to curb service
- Use of a personal care attendant (PCA), an escort, companion, or service animal

Transportation to your destination will not be scheduled without your complete information.

RIDERS WILL BE GIVEN A 30-MINUTE PICK-UP WINDOW WHEN RESERVING THEIR RIDE

FRTA will inform you of your pick-up time at the time you call to schedule your trip. The FRTA may negotiate a pick-up time with you that may be up to one hour before or after your requested pick-up time. For example, if you request a pick-up time of 9:00 a.m. the negotiated time could be as early as 8:00 am or as late as 10:00 am without making you late for an appointment. This allows us to give our consumers a better estimated arrival time. It is possible that you may be sharing this ride with other passengers and we may need to pick-up/drop-off other consumers. Your trip could take approximately the same amount of time that a similar trip on our fixed routes would take and may not follow a direct route between your origin and destination.

The driver will wait for five (5) minutes during your scheduled pick-up time. The driver *will not* call you or knock on your door prior to your pick-up time. It is your responsibility to be ready for your ride during the pick-up window assigned to you at the time your reservation was made. Return trip times must be scheduled at the time your ride is set up and again, the driver will not wait for longer than five (5) minutes.

If you know that your appointment is running late, please call FRTA at 774-2262 ext. 0 (*not dispatch*) and we will make every attempt to accommodate this change. We *cannot* guarantee same-day schedule changes, this is especially true if your origin or destination location has changed since originally arranging your transportation.

Your driver may assist you to and from the vehicle by providing curb-to-curb (or, if needed, door to door) service. However, the driver is not allowed to enter any buildings beyond the main door or lobby area. You must let us know if you need door-to-door assistance when booking your trip. You must be ready to exit the building at the specific exit that you specified when arranging the ride.

The driver will collect the fare when you board the vehicle. Please have the exact fare; the driver cannot make change for you and will not accept checks. For your convenience, FRTA has prepaid fare cards available for purchase. You will be told the amount of fare that you are

expected to pay when you schedule your transportation. If you do not have the fare, you will not be transported.

No Show and Cancellation Policy

Trips must be cancelled within 2 hours before a scheduled pick up or return time so that we can schedule and accommodate other passengers. Cancellations should be called into FRTA (not dispatch) at 774-2262 ext. 0. Failure to do so will result in a “no show” letter being sent out. You will also be considered a “no show” if you cancel your ride with the driver when he/she shows up to transport you or you fail to show up for your scheduled ride.

If you have failed to show for 25 percent of your rides in a 2-month period, you will be issued a 7-day suspension for your first suspension. After your suspension, this process will begin again. Subsequent suspensions periods will be:

2nd suspension: 14 days
3rd suspension: 21 days
4th and higher suspension: 30 days

Written notices will be sent to you listing each violation as they occur. Riders may appeal suspensions following the process on page 3.

Consumer Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the consumer to inform FRTA of address changes, changes in emergency contacts/phone numbers, or any other information that relates to accessibility changes or needs.

Consumers can assist us to ensure that trips run smoothly by being ready for their trip and waiting for each scheduled trip for the entire 30-minute window. The consumer must be ready to board the vehicle as soon as the driver arrives within the window. The driver is allowed to wait for five (5) minutes for the consumer.

The consumer is expected to read all of our guidelines carefully and contact us should there be any questions regarding our policies.

Subscription Reservations

“Subscription” service is when you travel to the same destination at the same time and the same day of the week. A subscription reservation eliminates the need for advance reservations for each trip. FRTA consumers are eligible for “subscription service” if they are unconditionally eligible for ADA complementary paratransit service.

Once a subscription request is approved, you do not have to make any further reservation calls except to cancel any trip you do not plan to take. Same-day changes cannot be accommodated. Subscription service is offered as a convenience to our clients. Availability is based upon a first come / first served basis. Subscription service is not required under ADA; therefore, certain

restrictions may apply due to capacity constraints. At no time can subscription reservations exceed 50 percent of scheduled trips.

Changing Your Reservation

Changes to reservations will be accepted not later than 4:00 p.m. one business day before the ride date. Requests for changes on the ride date cannot be accommodated. Please do not ask the driver to change your trip, such as dropping you at a different address. Drivers are not authorized to change the trips they are assigned.

Inclement Weather

In the event of severe weather, including snow, ice, flooding, etc., the ability to provide transportation may cause delays or us to cancel transportation. If you do not have to travel on these days, please call our office to cancel your trip in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to provide transportation, but safety considerations may prevent trips being provided. On days or routes that fixed-route buses do not operate, ADA complementary paratransit will not operate.

Capacity Constraints

At the time the reservation is made, clients may be notified if excessive demand exists for their particular requested trip time, and an alternative may be negotiated. Operational problems attributable to causes beyond the control of FRTA shall not be a basis for determining that a pattern or practice of capacity constraints exists. Examples include, but are not limited to, unanticipated delays caused by another client, weather, or traffic conditions affecting all vehicular traffic that were not anticipated at the time a trip was scheduled.

Wheelchairs, Scooters, Lift and Securement Use

FRTA is required to transport mobility devices/wheelchairs which the lifts on our buses can accommodate. Our wheelchair lifts are designed to accommodate mobility devices/wheelchairs up to 34 inches in width and up to 52 inches in length. When occupied, the mobility device/wheelchair can weigh no more than 800 pounds. Devices not meeting these criteria can not be transported.

Wheelchairs and their users shall be secured at all times during boarding, disembarking, and transporting operations. There are many types of wheelchairs, and it is often difficult to identify the main-frame of a wheelchair. Scooter-type devices have been shown to be unstable on wheelchair lifts and sometimes may exceed the weight and ADA allowable dimensions. Scooters can also be unstable once inside the vehicle. Clients traveling with scooters should adhere to the same safety procedures as those for wheelchairs. Clients who use scooter-type mobility devices who are capable of transferring to a vehicle seat are strongly encouraged to do so during transport. Clients using wheelchairs or scooters are required to be secured using a four-point tie down system at all times while riding in the vehicle. Failure to cooperate with safety-related

policies may result in suspension of service. Mobility devices are strongly encouraged to back onto the wheelchair lift as prescribed by the manufacturer.

FRTA cannot transport customers with inoperative mobility devices.

Ambulatory Clients Accessing Lift for Vehicle Boarding

Clients unable to use the steps to enter the vehicle may use the lift standing to board the vehicle. Ambulatory clients who use the wheelchair lift must be able to stand without assistance and to hold onto the handrails.

Medication and Transporting Other Life-support Equipment

Clients may travel with respirators, portable oxygen, and other life-support equipment, provided such transport does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. Clients using such equipment are strongly advised to use medical transportation and/or travel with a PCA and may not be allowed to carry additional oxygen tanks if transported in an unsafe manner. Public transportation is subject to unpredictable conditions such as traffic delays and mechanical problems.

FRTA ADA complementary paratransit service is not medical transportation. FRTA cannot be held responsible for the administration of medications. The administration of medication when in an FRTA vehicle is the client's responsibility. Any client requiring assistance in the administration of medication or oxygen while on the vehicle must travel with a PCA. Should the administration of medications or oxygen become necessary while on the vehicle, FRTA will contact emergency medical services (911) to administer the required medication at the client's expense. Additionally, FRTA will contact emergency medical services (911) anytime a client requires immediate medical attention.

Accessible Origins and Destinations

Service to or from inaccessible origins or destinations will be provided at the nearest curb or location where safe access exists. In this instance, a PCA is strongly advised if additional assistance is needed. In order for us to provide you with safe, on-time service you must specifically designate a location and inform us where you will be waiting for your pick-up. FRTA has developed the following procedures to ensure safe vehicle movement and standardized connecting point guidelines.

Clients living in large, multiple unit apartment complexes must meet the vehicle either at the curb closest to their unit address or at the curb closest to the main lobby or central building, unless instructed otherwise. If the apartment complex is inaccessible to FRTA vehicles, the client must meet the vehicle at the main entrance to the complex. Before FRTA can enter apartment complexes that are not easily accessible, the location must be inspected by FRTA. If the facility has a guarded gate or limited access, the client should inform the security staff of the scheduled pick-up and return times. It is the client's responsibility to notify FRTA of security procedures or access codes when the reservation is made and to arrange access for the vehicle. FRTA service cannot be delayed due to complicated access requirements.

A client traveling from a large office complex, medical facility, or other similar area must meet the vehicle at the curb closest to the main reception desk or main lobby entrance. FRTA is committed to arriving within its pick-up / ready window. If the client is not at the proper pick-up location within the designated pick-up / ready window and the five-minute grace period has expired, the vehicle will depart and the client will be declared a “no show”. Out of courtesy for other FRTA clients who are scheduled on the same vehicle, the driver will wait no longer than a five-minute grace period. Clients must be ready to depart at any time during the pick-up / ready window described when reservations are made. If a client has not boarded the vehicle within the five-minute grace period, the vehicle will depart. The dispatcher will not call the client by telephone to advise that the vehicle has arrived. FRTA, however, will call by telephone any client that is sight- or hearing-impaired to notify them that the vehicle has arrived. It is the client’s responsibility to be at the curb or within viewing distance of the driver when the vehicle arrives. Please note that for your and other clients’ convenience, FRTA *cannot wait* while clients conduct business at their destination.

Access to Information about FRTA Services

This information will be made available in accessible formats as necessary to enable users to understand FRTA’s services and policies. Applicable policies will be reviewed by reservation agents when reservations are made.

Lost & Found Articles

Lost and found property is stored in a locked / restricted area to maintain accountability, safekeeping, and security. Every reasonable effort is made to keep the property in the same condition in which it was recovered. Items may be mailed to the person on request at the owner’s expense, or returned in a manner deemed secure. Articles will be held for ten (10) days. To claim a lost article, please call (413) 774-2262. Consumers are responsible for claiming lost articles.

Disruptive Behavior

Service will immediately be denied on a long-term basis to clients who engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal behavior. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: threats or fear of physical or verbal abuse; unlawful harassment, including unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations; unauthorized use of equipment on the vehicle; voluntarily and repeatedly violating riding rules, including smoking on the vehicle, not wearing a seatbelt, standing while it is in motion, eating or drinking, carrying or displaying weapons, or defacing equipment; refusing to comply with other requirements specified in the policies above; or providing false information in order to qualify for ADA certification.

The use of alcoholic beverages or riding under the influence of intoxicating drugs or alcohol is prohibited at all times.

Nondiscrimination Notice

A high priority of FRTA is to ensure the transit program is administered and provided free of discrimination to all employees, job applicants, and program participants and applicants. FRTA does not discriminate against any person because of sex, age, race, creed, color, disability, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, political affiliation or belief, or heritage. Furthermore, FRTA specifically prohibits all forms of sexual and other unlawful harassment within FRTA.

Suggestions & Comments

FRTA seeks to provide its clients with safe, reliable, and customer-friendly service. We look forward to working with you to provide the best service possible. If you have a suggestion or comment, please call our Administrator at (888) 301-2262 or (413) 774-2262; TTY (413) 774-2262 or write to:

FRTA Administrator
12 Olive St.
Greenfield, MA 01301

Specific details will help us thoroughly address your suggestions or comments in an expeditious fashion. Please remember to include the following information when calling or writing to us:

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Location, day and time of experience, if applicable
- Vehicle number and/or driver's name / description, if applicable
- Dispatch / reservation agent's name, if concerning a telephone conversation
- Suggestion or comment

Complaints

FRTA will act upon your complaints accordingly. We realize that you rely on our services and want your experience with us to be a positive one. Hearing from our consumers helps us to make improvements where necessary.

Complaints should be addressed to:

FRTA Administrator
12 Olive St.
Greenfield, MA 01301
(888) 301-2262 or (413) 774-2262; TTY (413) 774-2262

A complaint may be filed orally, in writing, in person, or by any other appropriate means. The complaint will be reduced to writing if necessary by FRTA and when possible be provided to the complainant for signature. The complaint should contain the name and address of the person filing the complaint (complainant) and briefly describe the alleged violation of the regulations.

A complaint should be filed within sixty (60) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violations.

An investigation, as may be appropriate, shall follow a filing of a complaint. The investigation shall be conducted by FRTA. These rules contemplate informal but thorough investigations, affording all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to a complaint.

A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by FRTA and a copy forwarded to the complainant no later than twenty-one (21) days after its filing.

FRTA shall maintain the files and records relating to the complaints filed.

The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within seven (7) calendar days of the original determination to the FRTA Assistant Administrator. The Assistant Administrator shall consider the complainant's request for reconsideration. The request for reconsideration shall be considered denied if no action is taken within the (10) days after the date the Assistant Administrator received the request for reconsideration.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impeded by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as filing an ADA complaint with the responsible federal or state department or agency. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that FRTA complies with the ADA and implementing regulations.