

Riders Choice Program Riders Guide

Welcome to a Transportation Choice for TOPS Customers

The Paratransit Riders Choice Program provides a transportation choice for TOPS customers intended to enhance your existing paratransit services. Some customers may prefer the convenience of same day taxi trip service to the pre-scheduled TOPS paratransit service.

Customers in the program have the choice to call a program authorized taxi company or a licensed transportation network company to schedule a trip within Broward County.

The Riders Choice trips must originate and end ONLY in Broward County.

The Riders Choice card will not pay for trips that do not start and end in Broward County. The entire cost of a trip into or out of Broward County must be paid by the customer. If a customer uses a Riders Choice Card for payment for trips that start or end outside of Broward County, the customer's Riders Choice Card may be deactivated.

Enrolling in the Riders Choice program does not affect your TOPS eligibility or use.

Customers must always have their Riders Choice Program payment card present when traveling or the customer is responsible for the entire cost of the trip.

The most current program information will be found on the Riders Choice website www.broward.org/BCT/Pages/RidersChoice.aspx

You may also call 954-357-8405 OR

email questions to RidersChoice@broward.org

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Do I need to maintain my TOPS Paratransit eligibility to participate in the Riders Choice Program?

Yes. You must maintain your paratransit eligibility to continue to be part of the Riders Choice Program. If your paratransit eligibility expires, your Riders Choice Card will expire on the same date. By keeping your TOPS eligibility current you will keep your Riders Choice Program payment card valid.

How does the Riders Choice Program work?

The Riders Choice payment card will pay the trip's actual metered fare up to \$18.00 for **trips that begin and end in Broward County** when the customer uses the payment card for trips with authorized transportation companies within Broward County. Unlike TOPS, the Riders Choice trip can be a same day, direct to your destination, and no fare for you if the trip is below the \$18.00 limit.

My Riders Choice card has an expiration date of January 31, 2019. Can I still use my expired Riders Choice card?

Yes, as long as you are eligible for TOPS you may still use your Riders Choice card even if the date has expired.

How do I use my Riders Choice Card?

At the end of the trip, swipe your card in the card reader in the back of the taxi to deduct **up to \$18.00 per trip**. If your card does not have an available trip balance, you will be responsible for paying the entire fare. You must pay any meter rate above \$18.00 using cash or credit/debit card. If the payment card reader in the taxi is unable to process your Riders Choice Card for any reason, please ask the driver to contact taxi dispatch to process the card. You may also call 954-357-8405 to verify if the payment card reader inside the taxi processed the payment.

Do I need to tell the taxi company that I am in the Riders Choice Program?

No.

Does the Riders Choice Card pay for the driver's tip?

No. The Riders Choice Card cannot be used to tip the driver.

Broward County will pay up to \$18.00 of the trip's actual metered fare.

Examples:

- If the taxi trip cost is \$12.00, the program payment card would pay the actual \$12.00 cost of the trip. The customer would have no financial responsibility because the trip fare was less than \$18.00.

- If the taxi trip cost is \$20.00, the program payment card will pay \$18.00 and the customer is responsible for paying \$2.00.

What do I do if there is a problem processing payment with the taxi card reader?

If the payment card reader in the taxi is unable to process your Riders Choice Card for any reason, please ask the driver to contact taxi dispatch to process the Riders Choice payment card. The taxi dispatch staff is trained to process the payment card manually. You may also call 954-357-8405 to verify if the payment card reader inside the taxi processed the payment.

When do I call a cab?

Call an authorized transportation company to book a trip as soon as you know you will need a taxi. The most current list of authorized companies can be found at www.broward.org/BCT/Pages/RidersChoice.aspx or call 954-357-8405. Tell the dispatcher the time and place you wish to be picked up in Broward County, as well as your trip destination in Broward County.

If you have a set appointment, be sure to allow ample time to get there. Even though taxi rides are direct, you need to allow enough time for the driver to get through traffic. When you request a taxi, listen carefully to the questions the dispatcher asks. The more details you give, the better service the cab company can provide. Notify the taxi company as to the type of vehicle needed.

How many Riders Choice trips can I take each day?

You are limited to taking **2 one-way taxi trips per day within Broward County.**

Who may use the Riders Choice Card?

Only the paratransit eligible rider may possess and use the Riders Choice Card. An attendant or companion cannot under any circumstances use your Riders Choice Card. Misuse of your Riders Choice Card can lead to suspension from the program.

Protect Your Riders Choice Card from Damage

Riders should keep their Riders Choice cards away from all magnets and cell phones to limit the possibility that the card will get damaged. Please report a damaged card to Paratransit 954-357-8405 or by sending an email to RidersChoice@broward.org .

Trip Planning

Choose between taking a trip on TOPS by making a reservation with the TOPS Call Center 1-866-682-2258 by 5PM the day before OR by contacting a Riders Choice taxi the same day. Do not make a reservation on TOPS and a taxi for the same trip.

Subscriptions

If you have a TOPS trip subscription and want to take a taxi instead, you must first cancel your TOPS trip subscription by calling the Call Center 1-866-682-2258.

Misuse of Riders Choice Card

Use of your Riders Choice Card by anyone other than yourself is considered misuse. Any evidence we obtain which points to the possible misuse or abuse of the Riders Choice program may result in your suspension or revocation from the program.

Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Riders Choice Cards

A lost, stolen, or damaged Riders Choice Card must be reported as soon as possible to the Paratransit office by calling 954-357-8405 or by sending an email to RidersChoice@broward.org. Once a Riders Choice card is reported as lost, stolen, or damaged, it will immediately be deactivated. A newly issued Riders Choice Card will be mailed out to the registered rider via first class U. S. Mail. New or replacement cards may only be mailed out to the registered rider's mailing address on file with the paratransit office.

What if I have a complaint about my taxi ride?

Contact Broward County's Consumer Complaints by calling **954-357-5350** or visiting the Consumer website at www.broward.org/Consumer/Complaints.

Broward County's Consumer Complaints accepts written complaints from consumers regarding alleged unfair and deceptive trade practices of businesses, including contractors you have hired, which are primarily located in Broward County. If you believe you have been a victim of an unfair and/or deceptive trade practice, call **954-357-5350** or send an **e-mail** to consumer@broward.org. You may also submit a General Complaint Form found on our website:

<http://www.broward.org/Consumer/Forms/Documents/GeneralConsumerComplaint.pdf>

Where do I find the most current program information?

The most current program information can be found on the Riders Choice website www.broward.org/BCT/Pages/RidersChoice.aspx

Contact Us

What if I have other questions?

For all other Riders Choice program questions, please contact the Riders Choice Program at 954-357-8405 or email RidersChoice@broward.org .

TOPS Reservation/Call Center:

1-866-682-2258