

Boston Bikes Pass

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Boston Bikes Pass?

The Boston Bikes Pass is an annual Bluebikes membership that is offered at a reduced rate only to [residents who live in the City of Boston](#). The reduced-rate membership is provided by the City of Boston as part of a pilot program to explore options for making travel by bike more affordable. City of Boston residents who have not had an annual Bluebikes membership in the last three years are eligible for the **\$60/year membership (regular rate is \$129/year)**. City of Boston residents who qualify for MassHealth, SNAP, or have an income qualifying them for these or similar programs can get an even further reduced rate at **\$5/year (regular Income-Eligible rate is \$50/year)**. Any Boston resident 16-years or older who meets income guidelines is eligible for the \$5 annual pass, whether or not they have had a Bluebikes annual membership in the past.

Please note that riding an ebike will incur extra fees, regardless of your membership or pass type. Ebikes are available at \$0.10 per minute for \$60/year Boston Bikes Pass members and \$.07 per minute for \$5/year Boston Bikes Pass members.

Residents can apply for a Boston Bikes Pass by visiting boston.gov/discounted-bluebikes and filling out the appropriate form. Those applying for the Income-Eligible Boston Bikes Pass will need to upload documents to verify enrollment in a public benefit program like SNAP or MassHealth, or to demonstrate a qualifying income. Once verified, residents will be sent instructions to sign up.

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Bluebikes Annual Membership Options				
	<i>Boston residents only</i> Boston Bikes Pass	<i>Boston residents only</i> Income-Eligible Boston Bikes Pass	<i>Non-Boston residents</i> Annual Membership	<i>Non-Boston residents</i> Income-Eligible Annual Membership
Membership price	\$60/Year	\$5/Year	\$129/Year	\$50/Year
Membership restrictions	Must not have had a Bluebikes membership in the last 3 years	Household income qualifies for any of these programs: MassHealth, SNAP/EBT, Pell Grants, Public Housing, Section 8, TAFDC, WIC, LIHEAP		Household income qualifies for any of these programs: MassHealth, SNAP/EBT, Pell Grants, Public Housing, Section 8, TAFDC, WIC, LIHEAP
Ride time limits (classic bikes only)	45 minutes	60 minutes	45 minutes	60 minutes
Overtime fees (classic bikes only)	\$2.50/30 minutes	\$2.00/30 minutes	\$2.50/30 minutes	\$2.00/30 minutes
Ebikes fees	\$.10/minute	\$.07/minute	\$.10/minute	\$.07/minute

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How do I get a bike?

Once your account is active, you can start riding right away!

You can unlock a traditional pedal bike (“**classic bike**”) by using your **key** or the **mobile app**. Use your smartphone camera to scan the bike’s QR code. The QR code is between the handlebars. Wait for the green light and a “ding,” indicating that it is now unlocked.

Or you can insert your **credit/debit card** on file into the kiosk. You’ll receive a numeric code to enter on the dock by the bike.

In the app, **ebikes** have an electric ‘bolt’ under the bike icon to identify them at a station. They will appear as a separate option and the number of available ebikes will be displayed. If you’re at a station, look for a silver bike with a screen.

You can unlock an ebike by using your **key** or the **mobile app**. For now, riders cannot use their credit/debit card at the station kiosks to unlock ebikes.

Ebikes are not allowed to be ridden on sidewalks in Massachusetts.

How long can I check out a bike for?

Once you unlock a **classic bike**, you have to return it to another station within a certain period of time to avoid overtime fees. Riders with the **\$60/year** Boston Bikes Pass have 45 minutes, and riders with the **\$5/year** Income-Eligible Boston Bikes Pass have 60 minutes to return the bike. You can keep a classic bike out for longer, but extra time fees apply.

Ebikes have no ride time limits, but they cost an additional per-minute fee.

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What extra fees should I know about?

You must return your **classic bike** within the trip time limits associated with your membership type. If you have the \$60/year Boston Bikes Pass membership, you will be charged **\$2.50 per additional 30 minutes**. If you have the \$5/year Income-Eligible Boston Bikes Pass membership, you will be charged **\$2.00 per additional 30 minutes**.

Ebikes are available at \$0.10 per minute for the \$60/year Boston Bikes Pass membership. If you have the \$5/year Income-Eligible Boston Bikes Pass membership, you will be charged \$0.07 per minute. All per minute ride prices are rounded up to the nearest minute.

You are responsible for the bike once you take it from a station. Do not leave your bike unattended. If your bike is not properly locked into a station, it could be stolen. **If you fail to correctly return your bike, you will be charged a minimum fee of \$250, and up to \$1200.**

Ebikes that haven't moved for 45 minutes but are not locked in a dock will "idle end." The ride will automatically end, and the bike will be unusable until it has been recovered by Bluebikes operators. The rider will be charged the total cost of the ride plus an "idle end fee" of **\$25** since it was not docked.

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How do I know if I have successfully returned my bike?

You must return your bike to a Bluebikes station when you are done using it. When your bike is properly locked into the dock, you will hear a beep and see a green light. **Do not leave the bike if you do not see the green light.** [Review this guide to correctly returning a bike.](#)

If you use the mobile app, you can sign up for a notification confirming your ride has ended.

What do I do if something feels wrong with my bike?

If you sense a safety issue with your bike, stop riding the bike, return it to the nearest station and press the button on the dock with a wrench symbol on it. This will turn the light on the dock red so no one else can use the bike before our technicians can fix it.

Bluebikes bicycles are checked in the field 1-2 times a month to ensure they are safe and are operating in top condition.

What features do ebikes have?

Ebikes feature a motor on the rear of your bike, brakes on the front along with bells on each handlebar, and a consistent, single speed so there's no need to adjust the gearing.

These ebikes are class 1 electric bicycles. The motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling. Once the ebike gets up to 18 mph, the pedal-assistance turns off.

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How will I know if an ebike needs charging?

When you tap on a station in the Bluebikes app, you will see the number of available classic bikes and ebikes. Swipe up to see the list of available ebikes and their estimated range ranked from greatest to least. Select the ebike with the greatest range.

If you're at a station, available ebikes will display their estimated range on the screen located between the handlebars.

Where can I ride an ebike?

You can ride ebikes on streets, in bike lanes, on bike paths, and on paved trails except where prohibited (check for signage!). Unlike traditional pedal bikes, you are not allowed to ride ebikes on sidewalks or natural surface trails in Massachusetts.

How fast can the ebikes go?

The pedal-assist motor on an ebike shuts off once the bike reaches 18 mph. Remember to adjust your riding speed to match the situation. Be cautious around others, especially when approaching intersections, riding in bike lanes and paths, or riding close to parked cars. In shared spaces, be mindful of pedestrians and slower riders.

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Can I reserve an ebike?

You can reserve an ebike for up to 10 minutes. Each reserved minute costs the same as a minute ridden (\$0.10 per minute for \$60/year Boston Bikes Pass members and \$.07/minute for \$5/year Boston Bikes Pass members). The screen on the ebike will display “reserved.” Other riders will not be able to undock reserved bikes.

Is my spouse/partner/child/parent/etc eligible for this program?

When you sign-up for your membership, you have the option to add more riders to your account. However, if you have a Student, Group, Income-Eligible, or Boston Bikes Pass discounted membership, any additional riders you add will be added at a full-price. Anyone interested in a discounted pass will need to apply and sign-up for a membership under their own account.

For additional information and responses to common questions, please visit help.bluebikes.com.

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How can I learn more about plans to add more Bluebikes stations?

In September 2022, [Mayor Wu announced a 100-station expansion](#) of the bike share system in Boston.

These new stations will fill gaps in high-demand areas, making our system more reliable for riders. We'll also add stations in neighborhoods to improve access to the system overall. Today, more than 90% of Bostonians live within a 10-minute walk of a bike share station. We aim for a 3- to 5-minute walk in our denser residential neighborhoods. We also want to be sure all major transit stations and stops are served by bike share stations.

To stay engaged with our expansion plans, you can sign-up for our email list at www.boston.gov/bluebikes#expansion.

Who owns, manages, and operates Bluebikes?

Bluebikes is a public bike share system that is municipally owned, and managed by Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Everett, and Somerville. As co-owners of the system, the municipalities invest in bikes and station equipment and execute station expansion plans in collaboration with residents. Blue Cross Blue Shield is our title sponsor. We have contracted with Lyft to operate the system.

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