Mobility Guide

for the Central Midlands Region

courtesy of The COMET

THE COMET

The COMET Bus System

The COMET (Central Midlands Transit) operates 34 fixed routes, 12 UofSC Transit routes and five ReFlex routes as a hub and spoke system in Richland and Lexington Counties. Many of the routes operate through COMET Central, as well as other Super Stops throughout the service area. The COMET's Newberry and Lower Richland Express details are below.

Newberry Express

93X express runs a morning and evening trip between Newberry and Columbia. It is operated by The COMET.

Lower Richland Express

44X express runs a morning and evening trip between Sumter, Eastover, Hopkins, and Columbia. It is operated by The COMET.

Contact Information

Phone number: 803-255-7100
Website: www.catchthecometsc.gov

The COMET Special Programs

DART

To qualify for DART service, applicants must be unable to reasonably access and/or use The COMET fixed route system independently. Those who wish to use the DART system can be certified as eligible by completing an application and following the short eligibility review process.

COMET to the Market

Seven days a week between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m., apply the promo code COMETMARKET20 on Lyft and your trip must originate or end at the following fresh food markets: Walmart & Walmart Neighborhood Market, BiLo, Kroger, The Fresh Market, Whole Foods Market, Aldi, Food Lion, Gourmet Shoppe, La Estrella Supermarket, Lowe's Fresh Food, Ole Timey Meat Market, Piggy Wiggly, Publix, Rosewood Market & Deli, Sam's Club, Costco, Save-A-Lot, State Farmers Market, Target, Trader Joes, and Supermercado El Mariachi.

COMET Vanpool

Through the "Commute with Enterprise" program, The COMET subsidizes up to $500 per month for the use of a vanpool.

Soda Cap Connector

The COMET's Soda Cap Connector is a downtown shuttle intended for tourists and locals to hop from district to district in the urban core of Columbia for only $1.00 per ride. This service travels between Five Points, Main Street and The Congaree Vista District over the river into Cayce and West Columbia. The Soda Cap also runs seasonally to Segra Park, home of the single-A baseball team, the Columbia Fireflies, located within the BullStreet District during home games.

COMET @ Night

Seven days a week between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., apply the promo code which is available on board the inside of The COMET buses to get the up to $8.00 discount.

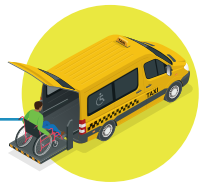
Blue Bike SC

The COMET riders can receive free 2-hour sessions on Blue Bike SC by asking their bus driver for a code. For more information visit https://catchthecometsc.gov/programs-services/blue-bike/.

The COMET Special Programs

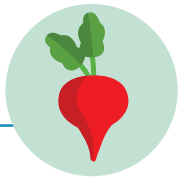
V-TRIP

The COMET offers an opportunity to people with disabilities and people 65 years and older to pay the friends and neighbors that drive them. The person must live in Richland or Lexington County in the Columbia Urbanized Area outside The COMET service area and complete a training and application process.



PUP

The COMET offers $50 in taxi or rideshare funds for trips to people with disabilities and people 65 years and older. The person must live in Richland or Lexington County in the Columbia Urbanized Area outside The COMET service area and complete a training and application process.



FoodShare SC On-The-Go

FoodShare South Carolina has teamed up with The COMET to increase fresh food access and affordability for transit riders in Columbia. This program allows passengers with busy schedules to connect to fresh produce at COMET Central.

Food delivery partnerships

The COMET provides food delivery for non-profit organizations in partnership with Senior Resources, FoodShare SC and Axiom Farms Cooperative. Customers interested in having food delivered to them by The COMET must contact the participating organizations directly.

Discounted Fare and Program Discounts

Qualifying identification for discount fare includes:

- Seniors age 65 & older (Senior driver's license/state ID card)
- Persons with disabilities (The COMET half fare ID card)
- Veterans (Military ID card or VA Veterans ID card)
- Medicare card holders
- Youth 16 to 18 years old with The COMET half fare ID card

- DART eligible customers ride fixed-route free with DART ADA ID card.
- Students, employees and/or affiliates of McEntire Produce, Richland One, Richland Two, Lexington/ Richland Five, Columbia College, Allen University, Midlands Technical College, Lexington Medical Center and Prisma Health can ride The COMET for free by showing their ID card.
- UofSC Students, employees and/or affiliates can ride ONLY UofSC Transit for free. The COMET routes and services require a fare.
- Interlined routes do not require an additional fare.
- The COMET employees, board members and transit operations contractor employees ride free.
- Children through 15 years old ride free. Children taller than 39 inches through 15 years old must have The COMET half fare ID card to ride free.
- SWRTA and Fairfield County Transit System customers with a transfer receive one free transfer on The COMET. The COMET customers with a DayPass or transfer receive one free transfer on SWRTA at joint stops only.
- Children age 10 years old or older can ride unattended. Children under 10 years old must have a fare paying passenger age 16 years old or older.
- Class Pass – $45.00 (Up to 5 adults and 40 students at $1.00 per ride).
- The COMET Half Fare ID Card – first card is free, lost card fee is $5.00.
- One Personal Care Attendant (PCA) for a person with a disability rides free. All other companions pay fare for their category.
- COMETCard – $2.00 for first card, $5.00 for lost card. Use for transfers between buses and to load 1-Day, 7-Day and 31-DayPasses.
- U-Passes are available during Spring (January 1 to May 31), Summer (May 1 to August 31) and Fall (August 1 to December 31) semester.
  - Spring and Fall U-Passes are $80.00 and decrease $20.00 each month.
  - Summer U-Passes are $60.00 and decrease $20.00 each month.
  - Proof of college enrollment required.
  - Passes are only sold at COMET Central and Midlands Technical College – Beltline Campus.

Other Transit Services in the Columbia Metropolitan Area

City Rover

City Rover is also known as “Yellow Shirts. They provide a free shuttle spanning 36 blocks of Main Street. The shuttle service operates Monday through Sunday at 7:30am to 11pm at night. This service is temporarily suspended due to COVID.

Phone number: 803-309-7758
Website: www.mainstcolasc.com/get-around

Fairfield County Transit System

Fairfield County Transit System provides the Killian Road Express in partnership with The COMET.

Phone number: 803-635-6177
Website: www.fairfieldsc.com/departments/transit-system

Newberry Smartride

Newberry Smartride is provided by the Newberry Council on Aging. They provide roundtrip transportation to Columbia for $15.

Phone number: 803-276-8266
Website: www.nccoa.org/riding-with-us

Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority

SWRTA provides express routes to and from Columbia to Sumter, Lugoff and Camden. It also operates local routes in Sumter, Kershaw, and Lee Counties.

Phone number: 1-888-748-4987
Website: www.swrta.com

Columbia Charlotte Shuttle

This is a door-to-terminal service that will transport you to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport for $55 each way per adult. Children 12 and under are $28 per child.

Phone number: 803-783-5123
Website: www.columbiacharlotteshuttle.com

Taxi, Rideshare, and Carpool

1. **Rideshare services** offer demand response service within minutes of a request. Unlike taxis, the shape, size and color of the vehicle will vary with each ride. There are also no guaranteed wheelchair accessible vehicles. The two ridesharing services available in the Central Midlands are:

Uber
www.uber.com

Lyft
www.lyft.com

2. **Taxi Services** have to be called or requested via app. They are an accessible alternative to Uber and Lyft but the accessible vehicles have to be requested at least 24 hours in advance. Checker Yellow Taxi Cab, the Original Blue Ribbon, and Capitol City are the three largest taxi companies in the Central Midlands.

3. **The AARPRide@50+ program** lets you choose from a vendor offered in the platform and book your ride online or through the call center.

Phone number: 1-888-851-2131
Website: www.aarp.org/RideColumbia

Medical Transportation

Emergency Medical Transportation

Transportation for people needing immediate medical attention because their condition threatens their life.

For Life Medical Transport

Phone number: 803-445-2600
Website: www.facebook.com/ForLifeMedicalTransport
Address:
454 Cromer Road
Lexington, SC 29073

First Priority Medical Transport

Phone number: 803-888-1388
Website: www.firstpriorityems.com
Address:
1831 Airport Blvd.
Cayce, SC 29033

AMS Ambulance

Phone number: 803-939-3009
Address:
210 N. 9th Street
West Columbia, SC 29169

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Transportation for people needing routine healthcare.

Transport Care Services

Transport Care Services provides transportation services for people to and from routine doctor's appointments and more. They provide accommodations for stretchers and wheelchairs too. Transportation with them may be covered by your medical insurance provider.

Phone number: 803-661-9662
Website: www.transportcareservices.com

ModivCare

The nation's largest manager of non-emergency medical transportation ("NEMT") programs for state government agencies and managed care organizations. The services include NEMT ride management, call center management, transportation provider network development and credentialing, and vendor administration.

Website: www.logisticare.com

Senior Wheels

Senior Resources provides accessible transportation to existing clients of Meals on Wheels and Home Care or Wellness Center programs.

Website: www.seniorresourcesinc.org/senior-care/transportation-service/

For Life Medical

Provides dialysis transportation.

Website: www.facebook.com/ForLifeMedicalTransport/

Southeast Medical Transportation Service

Transportation service for Greenville, Spartanburg, Richland, Lexington counties and the surrounding areas. They provide transportation services for hospitals, nursing homes, long term care facilities, dialysis clinics and more.

Website: www.scmedtrans.com

Vital Care

Their fleet of ambulances and wheelchair vans provides transportation to physician practices, medical providers, hospitals, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and more throughout South Carolina.

Phone number: 803-708-5938
Website: www.vitalcaresc.com
Address:
100 Northeast Dr., Suite 112
Columbia, SC 29203

The Access to Care (ICAM) Program

Powered by Feonix covers the cost of the first and last mile leg of a medical trip for seniors, veterans and single parents.

There is an option to take a direct trip to and from a medical facility if the patient cannot take The COMET fixed route for part of the trip. Referrals for this program are primarily made through the medical facilities, but individual requests can be made by emailing melanie@feonixmobilityrising.org.

Other Private Transportation

Senior Express

Website: www.seniorexpressusa.com

Transport Care Services

Website: www.transportcareservices.com

Harbison Wheels Van

Services Woodsedge, Lakeside and the AHEPA apartments in Harbison

Website: www.transportcareservices.com

Affiliated Transportation

Services the Midlands area

Phone number: 803-319-8307

Transport Care Services

Website: www.transportcareservices.com

Care.com

Private care providers can be drivers hired through the platform

Website: www.care.com

NOTE:

There are more private transportation vendors available in the Central Midlands that are not listed in this guide. If you would like your service to be listed, please contact Brittany Terry at 803-779-5121 or 803-834-2382.

Long Distance Transportation

Greyhound

Greyhound is an interstate bus line that travels to different places in South Carolina, across the nation and world. Southeastern Stages, Indian Trails and Greyhound have merged to maintain a nationwide network of bus travel.

Website: www.greyhound.com

Amtrak

A passenger railroad service that provides medium and long-distance intercity service in the contiguous United States and to nine Canadian cities.

Website: www.amtrak.com

Wanda Coach

Offers bus travel between Columbia SC and Chinatown, New York.

Website: www.wandacoach.com

Columbia Metropolitan Airport

Offers nonstop flights to eleven different cities and twelve airports.

Website: www.flycae.com

DISCLAIMER:

The content of this brochure is subject to change as providers change. This brochure does not claim to disclose every provider, nor does it endorse every service listed. This information is provided to assist individuals in finding transportation that supports their needs.